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ABSTRACT

This newsletter issue presents articles on the development of youth resiliency through caring relationships with adults, high expectations, engaging activities, and opportunities to make decisions and contributions. Youth development programs and the experiences of teachers, parents, and adolescents are described, organized in five categories: strategies for positive programming, issues facing youths, research and evaluation, youth leadership, and public policy. The issue contains the following articles: (1) "Keys to Bringing Family Support and Youth Development Together through Group Work" (Andrew Malekoff); (2) "Family Support is Crucial to Youth Development" (James D. Cox); (3) "Keeping the Glass Full: Ending the Prevention vs. Promotion Debate" (Karen Pittman); (4) "Mobilizing Communities To Build Youth Assets: How Family Support Can Help" (Peter C. Scales); (5) "Bridging the Generation Gap" (Raul Ratcliffe and Elizabeth Steinfeld); (6) "Paving the Road to Manhood: Interview with Geoffrey Canada" (Julia DeLapp); (7) "Youths Say...We Can Beat Gang Involvement" (Ulysses Jefferson); (8) "What Do Young Adolescents Need?"; (9) "Chemical Dependency and Substance Abuse: A Holistic Approach to Treating Youths" (Nathaniel W. Hurse and Debra Davis-Moody); (10) "What Makes Youth Development Programs Work?" (Donna Walker James and Edward DeJesus); (11) "Effective Programs in Youth Development"; (12) "Evaluating a Youth Program" (Edward C. Siegel and Cheryl A. Videen); (13) "Engaging Youth as Stakeholders in Communities" (Israel Romero); (14) "Young Mentors Share How They Help Inner City Youths Stay Positive" (Sam Beck); (15) "Youths Say...We Can Speak For Ourselves" (Dabriah Allston); (16) "Who Are Today's Youth?" (John Calhoun); (17) "Programs Mobilize To Stop Bill S.10"; and (18) "Youths Say...Teens Care about Politics" (Kym Stewart). (JPB)

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YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Family and Community Strategies

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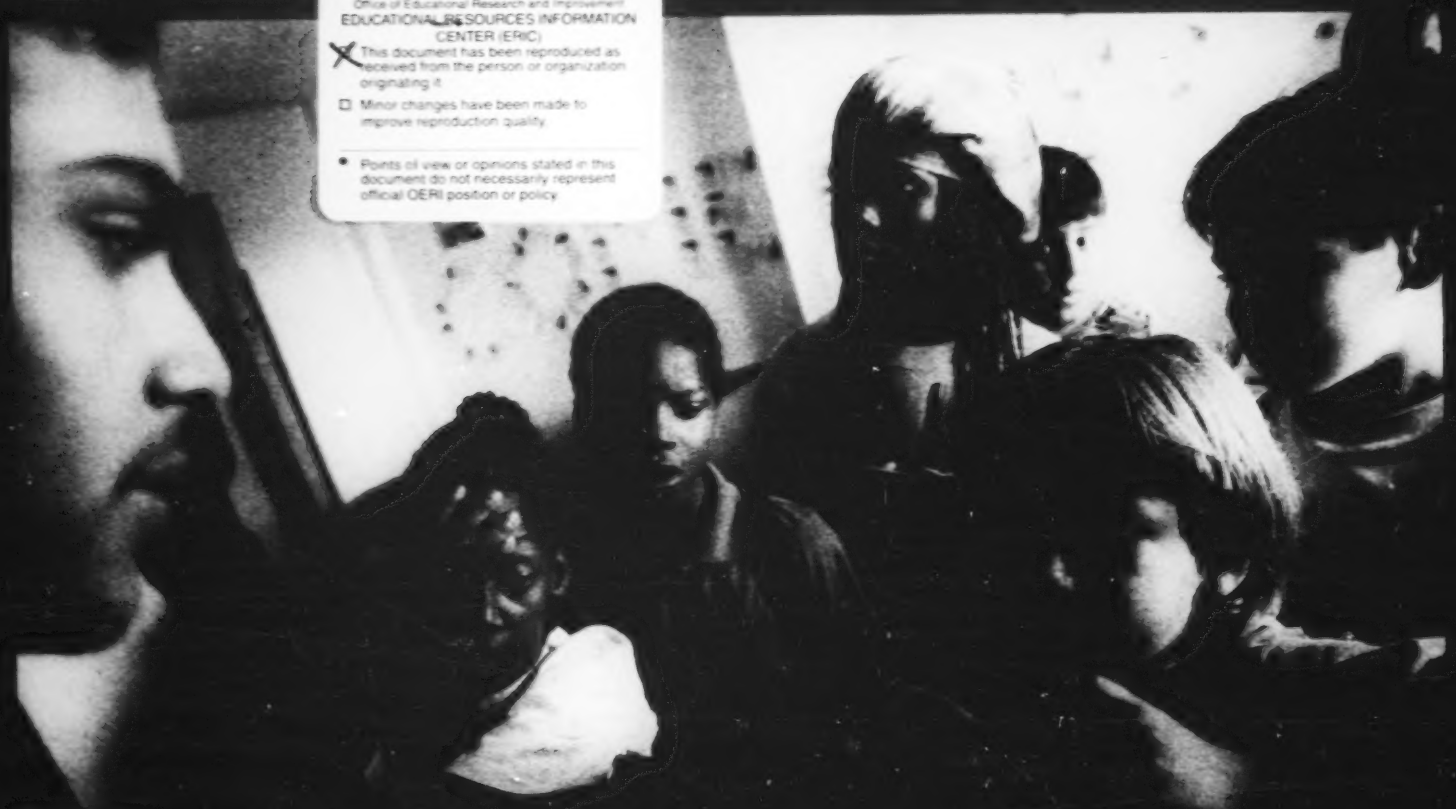

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Acknowledgments

Adolescence brings, along with its challenges, tremendous opportunities for the development of skills and attitudes that help ensure success later in life. Thanks to the programs, individuals, and organizations that took the time to write and be interviewed for this issue of FRCA *Report*, the family support and youth development fields have a helpful resource to turn to as they work to share their expertise and create programming and activities that help youths and their families succeed together.

FRCA *Report* extends special thanks to Michelle Cahill, Vice President and Director of the Youth Development Institute, Fund for the City of New York, who, as the mentor for this issue of FRCA *Report*, contributed her expertise and feedback on its contents.

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Cover Photo

Bresee Youth, in Los Angeles, offers a comprehensive program of positive activities and programs for youths, including mentors to help with academic skills development, sports and recreation, college preparation activities, and summer field trips and wilderness experiences. Students shown are using the "credit card" system at the Bresee Youth store, developed by students so that youths who work hard in school can use their achievements as purchasing power. Local businesses donate pizza, athletic equipment, and computer merchandise that the students can "purchase."

This photo and others are part of a nationwide photo exhibit tour and public education campaign, Pursuing the Dream: What Helps Children and Their Families Succeed. The campaign includes a photo book that shows community-based programs in action, and is a collaboration among FRCA, award-winning photographer Stephen Shames, and Aperture Foundation. For information on how to get involved or bring the exhibit to your community, contact FRCA.

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Family Resource Coalition of America is a membership, consulting, and advocacy organization that has been advancing the movement to strengthen and support families since 1981. The family support movement and FRCA seek to strengthen and empower families and communities so that they can foster the optimal development of children, youth, and adult family members. FRCA builds networks, produces resources, advocates for public policy, provides consulting services, and gathers knowledge to help the family support movement grow. For information or to become a member, contact FRCA at 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60606, 312/338-0900, 312/338-1522 (fax).

The opinions expressed in the FRCA *Report* are those of the authors; the *Report* strives to include a variety of perspectives from the family support field.

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About This Issue

by Michele Cahill

Youth development is an ongoing process through which all young people attempt to meet their needs and build the competencies necessary for survival and success. While the young person is the central actor in his or her own development, youth grow up in social contexts including families, neighborhoods, schools, informal groups, and labor markets. Research on youth resiliency has demonstrated that even when they grow up in high-risk environments, young people are likely to have positive outcomes if their lives are characterized by the presence and some measure of continuity of caring relationships with adults, high expectations, engaging activities, and opportunities to make decisions and contributions. Increasing the presence of these protective factors in the lives of youth is the goal of strategies for positive youth development.

The role of families in youth resiliency is well established. Many studies have shown that a good relationship with a parent produces effects that provide substantial protection against substance abuse. High parental expectations have been clearly identified as a significant contributing factor to school success for adolescents growing up in poverty.[1] The most recent findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health and the National Academy of Sciences study on adolescent risk-taking confirm the powerful role of families in shaping the development of adolescents. The national scope, large sample, and diversity of participants in the first of these studies underscore the compelling nature of the finding that family connectedness (caring, emotional bonds and emotional support) is a significant protective factor for youth. Also that youth who perceive high parental expectations for school achievement both do better in school and have other healthy behaviors.[2]

While these findings appear to be commonsense, the importance of families during adolescence has often been overlooked. Sometimes this has been due to the more apparent influence of peers as adolescents seek to meet their needs for a sense of belonging and a sense of autonomy. In social services and health fields, the oversight is often rooted in long-prevalent single-problem orientations, in deficit views of youth and their families, and in patterns of funding that tend to focus narrowly on the specific problems of targeted individual youth. In the youth development field, the attention and energy demanded by the pressing need to work for more developmental opportunities and programs for youth has often obscured the importance of the contexts—including families—of young people's lives. On the other hand, the attention of family support practitioners often has been galvanized by the increasing and disproportionate poverty of children under age six, the lack of safe and affordable childcare, and evidence of the importance of development in the first three years.

Both family support and youth development are oriented toward social change and have become movements to improve outcomes for children and youth.

Family support practitioners and people who work in youth development share important concepts that can help reframe services in ways that overcome the limitations of the approach identified above: Both are proactive and emphasize participation and contributions as essential elements of positive development; both are asset-oriented, foster holistic approaches, and view community context as important; and both are oriented toward social change and have become movements to improve outcomes for children and youth. Some of the same research has shaped program development within each field. Notably, evaluations of effective prevention programs indicate that they take a developmental approach, are flexible and responsive to youth needs and talents, give individual attention, and situate themselves in the context of families and communities.

In the youth development approach, adolescents are seen as resources for themselves, their peers, and their communities. The building blocks of positive youth development are assembled by meeting needs and developing capacities. The needs are for a sense of safety, of belonging, of mastery, and of meaning in life. The developmental tasks that youth face are learning to take increasing responsibility for their own health; expanding their communication, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities, as well as their creativity; and building the skills they will need for economic self-sufficiency. Youth development theory recognizes that young people meet these needs and develop these competencies within families, communities, and opportunity structures that may influence them in either positive or negative ways.

Similarly, in family support, the capacity of families to provide nurturance, high expectations, and a sense of efficacy for their members is viewed as an essential element of individual growth, social stability, and the achievement of social equity. Families are recognized as a core asset for their members, for their communities, and for the wider society. Family support practitioners also argue that the ability of families to perform their crucial social roles is significantly impacted, whether positively or negatively, by the community context in which they live and the economic and social forces that affect them. As in youth development, effective programs for families and children offer broad-based and flexible services, build on the strengths of participants, and see their participants in a community context.

Despite these many similarities, in recent years social forces have influenced practitioners and organizations in each of these movements to go it alone. Many youth workers perceive that the increasing stresses that many families face have resulted in serious family conflicts and increased adolescent disconnection. Staff in youth programs have sometimes experienced themselves as the only caring adults in young people's lives and have given up on the possibility of helping vulnerable families function better for their adolescent sons and daughters. Youth advocates thus often feel that they have little in common with family support programs. Concurrently, the failure of problem-focused services to prevent poor outcomes for too many adolescents has sometimes led family support advocates to give up on adolescents and to put their entire emphasis on intervention in early childhood. This dismissal of the prospect of creating effective developmental supports and opportunities during adolescence has angered youth advocates and prevented the formation of alliances.

Nevertheless, the family support and youth development movements have a great potential for convergence, for becoming a powerful alliance for children and youth. What is needed to fulfill this potential and build such an alliance? One way to begin to answer this question is to identify similarities in orientation and guiding principles. Another is to engage in a dialogue that will stimulate the youth development field to focus attention on the roles of families in positive youth development and the family support field to focus attention on adolescents. Such a dialogue could begin with the following core questions:

- What do adolescents want and need from their families?
- What do parents want for their children and adolescents?
- What roles do families play in promoting positive youth development?
- What do families need to know and be able to do to enhance their prospects for raising healthy adolescents?
- What opportunities and supports do families need from their neighborhoods and communities in order to strengthen the likelihood of raising healthy adolescents?

A second set of questions relates to the roles of youth development and family support programs:

- What is the role of youth programs in positive youth development?
- Why do young people value their participation in youth development programs?
- How do parents view their teen's participation in a youth development program? Do most parents see these programs as resources for their children? Do they view them as expanding the opportunities available to their teenagers?
- How do families identify outcomes they want for their children and adolescents?
- How are these similar to or different from those outcomes defined by youth program practitioners?
- How do family support advocates and practitioners view youth development programs? Are they viewed as vitally important sources of supports and opportunities for children and adolescents, or seen merely as enrichment?
- Do youth organizations see it as part of their mission to help parents build family connectedness, communicate high expectations, and cultivate self-efficacy in their adolescents?
- How do youth development programs understand the role of parents of adolescents? Do they view it as an appropriate part of their own role to help parents address the tensions inherent in parenting adolescents (e.g., the tensions of providing caring emotional support and guidance while also encouraging independence; of providing structure and limits while allowing for increasing autonomy; of encouraging contribution and responsibility while encouraging independent choices and problem-solving)?
- Do family support programs view providing, linking with, or working for the creation of youth development programs as part of their mission?
- How do family support programs view their responsibilities for adolescents and for helping parents to function effectively for their adolescents?

Finally, important questions affecting the linkage of family support and youth development strategies include:

- How are strategies for linking youth development and family support affected by the varying stages of adolescence, that is, early, middle, and late adolescence/young adulthood?
- How are strategies for linking youth development and family support affected by issues of culture, class, gender, race, and ethnicity?

Addressing these questions would enable youth development and family support researchers, practitioners, and advocates to greatly expand their knowledge base. Such a dialogue would challenge the movements by bringing conflicts to the surface, uncovering new information and insights, and suggesting alternative ways of designing programs and strategies. It also would identify examples of convergence, that is, places where youth development and family support efforts already are integrated. There are already many examples:

- Sixteen of New York City's Beacon school-based community centers, which are operated by youth development organizations, provide family support programs. Parents are able to join as members, access a wide range of services, and join with other parents to plan and carry out activities. For example, in addition to evening classes and teen activities, parents plan and staff weekly "family nights" to which parents, children, and teenagers come for an evening of food and educational and recreational activities. Some centers offer activities like aerobics for adults, while youths participate in educational enrichment, recreation, youth leadership, career education, and community service programs. At some centers groups of parents and teens come together consistently for activities such as cultural dance. Both youth and adult discussion groups elicit concerns, conflicts, and strategies for support.
- Several school-based community centers in New Jersey cities have developed inter-generational activities and offer family counseling and conflict mediation programs to help young people address the stresses of their family lives.
- Two youth development organizations in New York City engaged teens to go door-to-door to encourage parents to bring their babies and young children to be immunized at health fairs. The teens facilitated the immunization of more than 500 children in neighborhoods where health centers and hospitals had succeeded in immunizing fewer than 100 over a much longer period.
- In Oakland, a group of high school students, and members of various community-based organizations actively recruited voter signatures (especially from parents) to get Kids First—an initiative to expand funding for children's services—on the ballot. They organized parents and other adults to see it through to a winning vote.

These and the other examples of interaction between youth development and family support approaches are encouraging, but such cooperation is not the norm—at least not yet. Greater dialogue is urgently needed to increase our understanding of commonalities and to identify the conflicts and barriers that keep youth development programs from addressing family roles and family support efforts from focusing on adolescents. With dialogue, it will be possible to create strategies to harness the aligned powers of the youth development and family support movements. Given the strengths of each approach, the results of such dialogue and cooperation promise to be highly rewarding.

Michele Cahill is Vice President and Director of the Youth Development Institute, Fund for the City of New of New York, 121 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10013, 212/925-6675 (phone), 212/925-5675 (fax).

Notes

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Paving the Road to Manhood

An Interview with Goeffrey Canada by Julia DeLapp

In Reaching Up for Manhood, *Geoffrey Canada addresses the difficulties that boys face when making the transition to manhood in the United States. Canada explores the conflicting and sometimes destructive messages we send to boys about what it means to be a man, and identifies ways in which we can be more consistent, caring, and supportive of boys as they struggle with the issues of growing up. His book is grounded in his childhood experiences in the south Bronx and in Wyandanch, Long Island, in his work as president of the Rheedlen Centers in New York City, and in his relationships with the boys he has mentored and fathered.*

JD: Why did you write *Reaching Up for Manhood?*

GC: Due to a number of unfortunate incidents in my own personal life, I began to think that there is something about being male in this country which is causing an awful lot of men to die young. Many of my adolescent boys who are 15, 16, and 17 were dying at an alarming rate, and friends of mine in their 40s were dying at what I also considered to be an alarming rate.

Subsequent research that I did for *Reaching Up* bore out the facts that boys in this country are really doing terrible in every major category of risk. They are in much more danger than girls. When you look at homicide rates, at suicide rates, at drug and alcohol use, boys are really in a lot of trouble. When you look at accidental deaths, car accidents, and accidents on the job, again boys are in terrible shape relative to girls. I then thought about how so many families do not have men in their households—17 million children are being raised without fathers—and I began to think that the way we are raising boys is influencing their trouble later in life. That's really what made me want to do the research that finally led to *Reaching Up for Manhood.*

JD: What it is about the way we're raising boys that is different from girls that is influencing these negative outcomes?

GC: We have a whole bunch of preconceived stereotypes about maleness that we unconsciously transmit to our boys. We tend to think boys are risk-takers. When our little boys want to jump off the stoop and climb high in the trees, we think it's a "boy thing." We often reinforce the things we consider manly by saying, "Wow, you're a big boy! Look at the way you did that!" when boys take risks or face pain. And in the games we teach boys, we encourage them to be aggressive and to be extremely competitive.

But we don't teach boys how to deal with the hurt that many of them face in their lives. We tell them "big boys don't cry." This allows our boys to grow up with the sense that there are some things that you never talk about, some things that you experience that you can't share with anybody. And they grow up to become teenagers and men who are not really well adapted to our present society. It starts very early; right from the pink and blue when these children are infants, boys learn to disconnect from their feelings. Boys are taught very early on in our lives that we cannot show fear, we cannot talk about our fears, and if we're really good men we cannot even *experience* fear. This is just impossible, so you automatically set up a set of contradictions which cause life-long pain for boys and men.

We don't think carefully enough about the kind of men we want to raise and how the values and principles we are trying to teach will get our boys there. Most of the time, we do what's been done to us, and the end result is pretty devastating.

JD: What do you think is the first step in changing the way the boys are raised?

GC: The first thing we have to do is really talk to our boys so that they learn early on to talk to us about their feelings. Even more importantly, we need to begin to explore our own stereotypes of maleness, because these stereotypes cause problems down the road. Problems such as early sexuality and promiscuity are related to stereotypes we all carry around with us of the male as the protector and the defender and the aggressor. Women come up to me who are raising boys themselves and say, "I worry about raising a mama's boy. How do I teach this boy to become a man?" It is okay to admit you have these concerns, but you have to consider whether or not you are truly doing your boy a favor by telling him when he comes in and he's in tears, "Hey, you have to be a big boy. You go back out there and you deal with it." Too often people think this prepares boys for the tough world of manhood and teaches them to be men. We have to question and challenge ourselves around that.

JD: So let's say a boy does come to you in tears. What do is a good response?

GC: A good response is to hear very clearly why that boy is crying, to acknowledge that it is real pain and is not any different from pain that all of us feel, and to emphasize that it is totally okay to cry when you're hurt. You then need to talk through how best to handle the situation, and see if there is a solution. Finally, you need to let him know that he should come talk to you again if he feels like that again or has trouble. The most important thing parents should understand is this: don't be afraid if your nine-year-old boy is in tears because his feelings have been hurt or because he has fallen down and hurt himself physically. You will not end up with less than a man if that child expresses those feelings. But you may end up with something less than desirable in terms of the kind of man we want if you teach that boy to shut those feelings down and not to express them.

JD: You also talk in your book about the consequences of boys repressing feelings of fear. What kinds of things can we do to discourage that repression and to encourage boys to talk about their fears?

GC: We have to get boys to understand that fear is a normal, natural, human experience that adults *and* children experience, that males *and* females experience. Most impor-

Girls Inc.

A Safe and Fun Place for Girls

Girls Inc., (formerly Girls Club of America) is a national organization dedicated to helping girls become "strong, smart and bold." Part of their mission is to encourage girls to explore their full potential. Above, Natalie practices for a soccer game. Right: At a summer camp session, participants take old computers apart during a science session.

Photos © 1997 Stephen Shames / Matrix

One of Girls Inc.'s main goals is to prevent teen pregnancy. Many of the programs, such as the one Natalie and Mally are participating in, use role playing as a way to help girls 12-14 practice how to deal with romantic situations.

tantly, we have to teach boys that you do not prove you manhood by challenging your fears and overcoming them. That is not the way you demonstrate you are a man. What happens to so many boys is that they start out with little things: I dare you to jump off the wall... a wall that's three feet high... and you jump and say "Ha ha, I wasn't afraid." And as they get older, the dares become drinking, smoking marijuana, robbing a store, or using harder drugs. The challenge to constantly prove your manhood to other boys grows each year, and the consequences of that challenge become such that boys are willing to die—I mean they are willing to die over clothing. They are willing to die over what they consider to be their manhood because someone looked at them the wrong way or someone said something to them. And this all goes back to the belief that men cannot show or experience fear. So many boys die foolishly, proving they were unafraid of a situation which any normal, intelligent, human being would have been terrified to be in. This is something that starts very early with boys and it escalates over time to the point that it becomes extremely dangerous for our boys.

JD: What advice would you give family support practitioners who work with adolescent boys?

GC: It's important to start slow. You can't talk about these kinds of issues without trust. If there's not a sense of mutual respect, boys will tell you, "You didn't grow up where I grew up. You don't have to deal with what I'm dealing with. If you were in my 'hood then you would truly understand what would happen if you show fear." So one of the things you have to do is establish trust based on mutual respect where you can say: "I respect that you are growing up in violent times where people have guns, that there are challenges and situations you face that absolutely make you want to respond in kind. I can admit all those things even while I'm

telling you not to do that." Building this kind of trust is the first thing.

The second thing is you have to be prepared for what happens when you get boys to admit these things. If you sit down with a couple of boys and say "Listen, you can trust me. Open up to me talk to me about what you're afraid of," you have to end by bringing closure to those feelings that those boys just exposed in a way that reaffirms their manhood. You have to say, "What a man it took to say you were scared when you went out the other day because you saw those three guys on the corner. That really took a man to say that, and I just want to say to you I have nothing but respect for you." If you don't take the time to do this, if you just head to your next class or activity when the hour is up, you have a session where boys expose themselves and get very scared about how others are going to view them and about how you are going to view them. And they will probably never do it again.

JD: Can you talk a little bit about what Rheedlen Centers do to support boys' development?

GC: We connect boys with men in their early twenties through our after-school programs. We have about a fifty-fifty split with staff, and everyone who comes to Rheedlen is always amazed that we have so many young men working. These are young men who are nurturers: they are the ones helping the children with their meals, helping them put their coats on, walking them home, holding there hands, and helping them with their homework. They also teach the children how to play basketball and other sports. We want to make sure our boys grow up with the sense of men as caring and tender, creative, artistic, disciplined, thoughtful, intelligent, and motivated. We want these boys to think, "I sure would like to be like Tony. He's the guy that picks me up after school and helps me with my homework, and I know he lives in my community and he's not using drugs or involved in crime. He's the kind of guy who cares about his community." When children are exposed to these kind of men very early on in their life, those men become the role models for these young boys. It is my belief that boys grow up like the men they are around most of the time. If they are around men that are involved in criminal activity, drugs and alcohol, or violence that's what they tend to think represents maleness. If they are around men who love their families, work for their communities, and care for other children and seniors in their communities, that's what they are more than likely going to end up being. And so one of our challenges is to make sure our boys are around men who represent the same kinds of values and ideals that many of us want these children to demonstrate when they become adults.

Geoffrey Canada is president of the Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families in New York City. He is the recipient of a 1995 Heinz Foundation Award and a Parents Magazine Award for his work in child advocacy, and he is author of Fist Stick Knife Gun.

Copies of Reaching Up for Manhood *can be obtained from Beacon Press, 25 Beacon Street, Boston MA 02108-2892, http://www.beacon.org*

Youths Say. . .

We Can Beat Gang Involvement

Interview with Ulysses Jefferson, age 15

FRCA: What does it mean to you to be a man?
UJ: It means that you take responsibility for yourself and your actions and the things that you do. If you get into something that is illegal or anything like that—if you're a man about it, you'll take care of it and do what you have to do to get it out of the way instead of prolonging it and holding it off.

FRCA: Is it okay for a man to cry?
UJ: Why shouldn't they? Women cry, babies cry, children cry, men should cry. They are human beings too, and sometimes you have to cry when your feelings are hurt. It's nothing to be ashamed of. Some people might call you a sissy, but you are a human being and you have to express yourself. Sometimes the only way you can release yourself and your feelings is through tears.

FRCA: Who taught you this?
UJ: My mentor at CADRE (Combating Alcohol and other Drugs through Rehabilitation and Education) taught me that. The mentors teach us different things about how to conduct yourself as an adult and as a person who does the right things. We are part of a program called Youth Power, for kids ages 14 and up, and we get to go on trips and participate in workshops that different organizations have. Then we teach the younger kids (1st through 6th grade) who are part of the Just Say Know program. I like having a position where you can help younger people to do better in school and teach them what you know and how to do things they don't know. It's like a growing up process.

FRCA: What is the hardest thing about growing up these days?
UJ: Probably staying away from gangs, because there are so many gangs out there trying to get new members. Every day of your life you hear that someone joined this gang and someone joined that gang. From what I've seen, people join gangs because they believe that the gang members love them more than their families do. But when my sister got into a fight with a gang member and the gang member's friends did not help her in the fight, I learned that people in gangs don't really love you. They are really there just to get you in trouble.

FRCA: What can we do to keep young people from joining gangs?
UJ: Kids need to have different ways to use their time instead of having a lot of free time. If they have other things to do, like homework, housechores, running errands for different people, or a job, then they won't have time to think about or get involved with a gang. Also, if you show young people some love and respect, and then let them talk with people who have already been through the gangs and have since turned their lives around, they can learn what being in a gang is like, what they would and wouldn't like about being in a gang, and why they shouldn't get into one. They could learn that when you're in a gang, you're not your own person. You're like a body of one.

CADRE is housed in the Ida B. Wells Housing Project at 595 E. 37th Street, Chicago IL 60653. For more information, contact Bernard Clark, Site Coordinator, at 312/674-3966.

Keys to Integrating Family Support and Youth Development Through Group Work

by Andrew Malekoff

According to a recent national survey by the Search Institute, family support programs across the nation are serving increasing numbers of youth 10 years of age and up.[1] Staff in these programs are unsure of the special needs and issues facing the parents and families of youth and are wondering how they can be more effective. At the same time, youth development advocates have identified building blocks and assets for healthy adolescent development.[2]

Adolescence today is an age of particular vulnerability, a time in which young people are experiencing the sexual awakenings of puberty, facing increasing social and educational demands, and experimenting with more freedom, autonomy, and choice than ever before. These factors present practitioners who work with youth a unique challenge in attempting to engage and connect with adolescents. Working with youngsters in groups can be an effective way for family support workers to engage youth, help them meet the developmental tasks they face, and navigate the changing currents of adolescence.

Why We Work In Groups

Proponents of both family support and youth development would do well to consider the advantages of working with adolescents in groups. Groups are able to:

- Provide young people, in collaboration with adults, with a range of experiences to stretch their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social limits in many challenging and healthy ways
- Promote the reflection and critical thinking necessary to clarify values and make healthy decisions
- Nourish childhood genius and talent in youth through the use of verbal and nonverbal activity
- Join the generations and enable them to reach out to one another and discover common ground

Adolescents need adults who can hang in there and not abandon hope. Good and competent leadership in the growth and development of meaningful groups is an important pathway for joining family support and positive youth development.

Photo courtesy of North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center

How to Integrate the Fields

The following are a sample of group work principles and practices that can promote positive youth development in family support programs.[3]

1. **Planning is where we must begin in youth development**

Careful planning and preparation can make the difference between programs that thrive and programs that fail. Planning is especially important when working with youth in groups. Workers must learn the components and interrelationships of good group planning: *need* (what are the needs of prospective group members?); *purpose* (what are the tentative purpose and goals of the group?); *composition* (who are the potential members?); *structure* (what concrete arrangements are necessary to proceed?); *content* (what means will be used to help the group achieve its purpose?); *pre-group contact* (how will prospective members be recruited?); and *agency and social context* (what obstacles exist and how will they be overcome?).

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to spend some time identifying needs. In youth development this is often an informal process of "hanging out" with young people on their turf to listen to what they talk about and observe what they do among themselves. The worker looks for what interests the adolescents, what concerns them, how they spend their time, and so on.

In developing one of my first groups as a VISTA volunteer in a low-income Mexican-American community, I learned about local youths' needs by sharing meals with families, attending dances at the local Latin Club, and participating in community activities. (These occasions also enabled me to form relationships with the extended family and understand their concerns and hopes for these young people.) In time, a coed group of young adolescents was formed that focused on the need to strengthen cultural identity and learn about the risks and impact of alcoholism. With neighborhood elders providing mentorship, the group, Los Seis, practiced traditional Mexican dance and studied history through the use of poetry and plays. They learned about alcoholism and its effects on the individual and family with the support of local resources. Ultimately the group achieved a level of confidence and mastery that led to trips across the state to spread their message (and their wings).

2. **Using the program to cultivate a sense of belonging and competence**

"Using the program" refers to what participants in a program do to achieve their goals. Los Seis illustrates that shared activities can add vibrancy to the group experience, fueling its capacity to transform itself into a unique entity—something new and

special that has never existed before.

Shared activity is the unbreakable, malleable stuff that real life groups are made of, creating "something-ness" from "nothing-ness." Purposeful shared activity can enable youth and parents to gain a sense of competence, belonging, self-discovery, invention, and creativity. It can also help them to extend the bonds of belonging beyond the group itself. Groups must be structured to welcome the whole person and not just the troubled, hurt, and broken parts.

In one after school program developed at the North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center near New York City, the Youth of Culture Drug Free Club launched several community service activities in partnership with parents and other adults. Activities included an international cultural day to celebrate diversity, a March for Unity following an interracial murder that threatened to spark riots in the community, and a visit to AIDS patients in a local nursing home. Such activities exemplify the principle of extending the bonds of belonging beyond the group itself.

3. **Forming alliances with parents and others**

As the above examples illustrate, adolescents cannot be seen in a vacuum. Parental approval and the cooperation of people in the systems that influence their lives (e.g., school) are necessary for ongoing work with adolescents. By establishing alliances with these "significant others," workers model collaboration and establish a groundwork for mediating between sometimes conflicting parties. Furthermore, in this era of categorical funding for human services, collaboration is often necessary in order to provide youth and others with comprehensive services.

In one after-school club, a recurrent activity was organizing drug-free dances for local youth. On one occasion, the conclusion of an otherwise successful dance, chaperoned by parents and agency staff, erupted into a violent confrontation between two adversaries. One of the youths was injured in the melee and required medical attention. In the aftermath, the workers' immediate response of bringing together the parents, community and school, and youth put the crisis to rest and prevented further violence. This effort would have been hampered if important people in the adolescents' lives—parents and relevant others—had been left out of the process. When planning group activities, youth group organizers must not overlook the importance of people who influence adolescents' lives in a variety of contexts.

4. **Mutual aid, valuing youth as helpers, and promoting what one has to offer**

A critical question for all workers involved with youth development is "Am I the central helping person here, or do I enable others to help one another?" *Workers must be willing to give up control, to decentralize authority, and to value the members as helpers.* Providing youth with opportunities to exercise what they have to offer is where real empowerment begins.

Giving up control is a frightening prospect for adults who have been socialized in the traditional helping paradigm of the worker as knowledgeable expert and client as passive recipient. Kids in action can be intimidating to workers who believe that noise and movement signal a loss of control and a sign of worker incompetence—especially for workers in agencies where this belief is the norm. Family support workers who work with youth need to find support among colleagues to prevent isolation and increase self-reflection, to ensure their longevity, and to provide continuity for the youth. Practitioners working with groups must be able to balance their role in facilitating the group process and activities with the need to allow and encourage the youth in the group to show initiative and leadership.

5. **Understanding, valuing, and respecting the group process**

Knowledge of group development will provide workers with ideas about where, when, and how to intervene in a purposeful manner. Too much of what passes as group work is little more than haphazardly throwing kids together without good planning, or keeping them busy with canned activities and exercises intended to keep workers anxiety-free. A knowledge of the special needs of groups during the beginning, middle, and ending phases of group development is essential for effective practice. For example, the ending of a group is an ideal opportunity to help members re-experience their "groupness" through a shared activity or ritual at the point of separation.

This bonding can be illustrated by a familiar recreation group to which thousands of children and adolescents have belonged and which holds its "meetings" in the natural setting of the community—little league baseball. One little league coach instituted an annual ritual of a post-season combination barbecue and parent-child softball game. As the end of the season approached, the players (boys and girls), their siblings, parents, and grandparents would start buzzing about the barbecue and making plans from the sidelines. Compare the feeling in this leave-taking scenario to that of the team whose ending would come and go as swiftly as the final pitch of the final game of the season. The ritual served to affirm each player's accomplishment of making it through another season.

All youth need safe places to go, worthwhile things to do, a sense of belonging, a sense of competence, a feeling of hope, and relationships with adults who can help to make a difference in their lives. Groups can fill each of these adolescent needs. As family support programs struggle to provide services to an increasing number of youth, they can rely on the time-honored method of working with groups to effectively meet the needs of the youth in their programs.

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11

Engaging Youth as Stakeholders in Communities

by Israel Romero

If you had driven around the corner of Cermak Road onto Marshall Boulevard on the evening of October 14th, you would have witnessed a disconcerting sight: dozens of small white crosses, each bearing a name, dotting the lawn in front of the office of Latino Youth, Inc. It was the last place that anyone who did not know about the unusual event going on that evening would have expected to encounter anything resembling a cemetery.

Latino Youths Participate and Educate program, as part of the Stop the Violence campaign, was conducting a vigil for the fallen children of the Pilsen/Little Village community of Chicago. Each of the crosses represented a friend, brother, sister, classmate, or son who had been caught in the crossfire of gang and drug violence in the community. Some of these people might have been gang members who at some time had themselves perpetrated violence against rivals in the illicit drug trade. Others were simply innocent bystanders who had had the supreme misfortune of being at the wrong place at the wrong time. No small number of the crosses represented very young children, some no more than two or three years old at the time of their death.

Participants in the vigil included former friends, teachers, and families of the fallen. Members of the Pilsen/Little Village Madres Por La Paz (Mothers For Peace) spoke poignantly to those gathered: "this one was my son" or "that one was a good student." Representatives of the faith community raised a prayer of mourning for those lost. For the participants, the names on the crosses represented faces that will be remembered long after society's attention turns to the next crisis.

News accounts of the violence behind such sad events evoke in most readers a temporary spasm of outrage that such things can happen. Some may even take a second, certainly admirable step and decide to no longer idly stand by while our children die. But whatever form the responses of people in the wider society might take, the almost invariable motivation behind attempts to deal with gang and drug violence in communities is a feeling that it is "us against them." A very few of "them" might be salvageable, but the rest are a "long-past-salvation criminal element" who should simply be incarcerated in the most secure penal facilities that can be built. Our community, however, has long gone past the resignation of "us against them." We realize that, like it or not, we are all in this together.

The family support movement advocates empowering families and communities, and has long worked to affirm strengths, build on community assets, and encourage family members to be resources for one another. We've learned that it is not just the professionals who are stakeholders in the health and well-being of families: the most important stakeholders are the very members of those families themselves. We've also learned to open a place at the table for the "others" in the community and, indeed, to recognize that the table is theirs.

For the participants, the names on the crosses represented faces that will be remembered long after society's attention turns to the next crisis.

Latino Youth, Inc. has discovered that among these "others" are the youth of our community: if engagement and empowerment are to be the engine that drives the vehicle of community development and increased opportunities, then these should be applied to youth as stakeholders in the community. We work to build a second chance for young adolescents who are sometimes defined as failures by those working in more traditional institutions. Latino Youth offers these young people a comprehensive mix of educational, counseling, and recreational programs in which they can receive client-centered and culturally grounded services from professionals, and more important, provides them opportunities to help craft what these services will look like in their community. When Latino Youth engages in public dialogue about what we do, it is often the voices of our youth that are most effective at communicating their successes.

The following small, very basic steps can help engage adolescents meaningfully in programs:

- First, invite them to set the agenda for their involvement in programs. Often, because adolescence is a time of chaotic transitions, adults feel they have to micromanage youth programs. Don't! And when you address youth, do so by name: this one is Michael, that one Jose, the other one Rodney. Personalize relationships with participants rather than simply classifying them as members of this or that group. Yes, it's messy, but it's also more challenging and effective.
- Second, assist them in developing models of responsibility and accountability to each other, to the program, and ultimately to the community. Latino Youth has succeeded in an alternative high school and in counseling and peer education programs because adolescents participating in its programs have had a hand in the governance process. Often the staff has been amazed that the youth in a program will hold themselves more accountable than do the adults.
- Third, involve the whole family in the program. Nothing provides more pride and fuel for healthy self-esteem than to witness the success of a family member.
- Finally, identify the strengths and values that youth exhibit in their relationships with each other—respect, support, even a sense of family. The ways adolescents manifest these values may sometimes conflict with or even be destructive of their sense of their place in the wider community. The point of youth programs is to provide structures within which adolescents can see their place in community as meaningful and learn to express their values through productive pursuits.

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Family Support is Crucial to Youth Development

by James D. Cox

Support of families is not a new concept to Boys & Girls Clubs. In varying degrees, Clubs have historically worked with families to assist children. While some Clubs implemented family support efforts that were formal in nature, the norm was for Boys & Girls Clubs to assist families in very informal ways.

Increasing challenges to families in general, and to the families of Boys & Girls Club members in particular, have focused added attention on the need for Boys & Girls Clubs of America to provide Clubs with family support program models and technical assistance. In its publication *Making the Case for Family Support*, the Family Resource Coalition of America notes: "Striking economic, social, and demographic changes are affecting American families in powerful ways. The crucial formative years of childhood have become a time of peril and loss for millions of children and their families."[1] Economic changes are placing families under increasing stress; pressures on single-parent families have intensified; and fewer neighborhoods are providing a safe, supportive environment for family cohesiveness. Given the socioeconomic profile of Club members throughout the country, the impact of these changes are especially acute. For example:

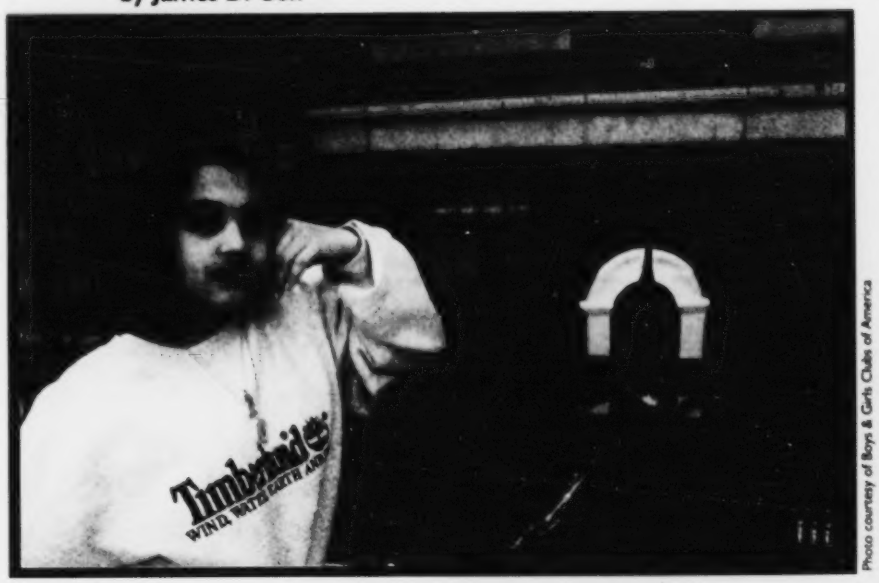

Photo courtesy of Boys & Girls Clubs of America

- More than half are from single-parent families
- More than half are from families with three or more children
- Nearly half are from families with annual incomes of less than $22,000.
- More than 70 percent live in urban/inner-city areas.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA'S TRADITION of service to our nation's youth began in 1860, when the first Club was established in Hartford, Connecticut. Since then, the organization has grown to serve more than 2.8 million youth in 2,000 professionally staffed Boys & Girls Club facilities, operated by over 800 Boys & Girls Club organizations nationwide. This affiliation of autonomous local Clubs, along with the national office of Boys & Girls Clubs of America, works to help youth of all backgrounds, with a special concern for those from disadvantaged circumstances, develop the qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders. Operating during non-school hours, Boys & Girls Clubs offer individual, small group, large group, and drop-in programs and activities based on the needs and interests of youth. Programs are designed around a youth development strategy that promotes in young people a sense of belonging, usefulness, influence or power, and competence.

In recent years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has experienced dramatic growth, chartering more than 1,000 new Club locations since 1987. In a recent "Philanthropy 400" report, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reported that Boys & Girls Clubs of America receives more private support than any other youth organization.[1] Boys & Girls Clubs of America continues to break new ground, reaching out to "at-risk" youth in non-traditional ways. Today, Boys & Girls Clubs operate programs involving young people in public housing developments, schools, military bases, homeless shelters, shopping malls, and on Indian lands.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America's formal Family Support Program initiative was born out of the recognition that our programming achievements for youth can be enhanced when we work as partners with their families. The primary mission of Boys & Girls Clubs is, and always will be, service to youth. There is recognition, however, that stronger families, and more family involvement, is good for children. Family support at Boys & Girls Clubs is child-centered, focusing on youth as the beneficiaries of strong, empowered families. This enhances and contributes directly to the youth development mission of Clubs. From a youth development perspective, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's family support initiative is based on the philosophy that:

- Children are served best when their families are involved
- The Club should involve the family as part of, or a partner in, a growth plan for youth
- The family should be the child's primary foundation
- The program should link the Club and its youth back to families, the neighborhood, and the community
- The youth development organization is in and of itself family supportive
- Stronger families mean stronger communities, which mean stronger youth

- Family support models can and will vary, based upon Club resources, philosophy, and community circumstance.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Family Support Initiative

The family support initiative at Boys & Girls Clubs of America has been generously supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This support has been crucial in moving the initiative forward. Program development has followed a pattern of research, assessment, review, implementation, and now, dissemination.

The process began in 1993 with a survey to ascertain which Clubs were providing services for families, what activities they were conducting, and if there was general interest in the field regarding family support. The survey was followed by a thorough review of current research, theory, best practices, and so on. Focus groups were conducted at five local Clubs to assess which programs were working and to listen to Club staff and parents to determine the programs' impact and to get their recommendations.

In 1995-96, five local Clubs were selected as pilot sites to implement family support programs. These Clubs provided services and held activities and events that addressed several areas: information and referral to community resources; outreach to fathers; information on substance abuse and violence; family togetherness; drop-in opportunities to spend time with staff members and other parents; and the promotion of parenting and life skills. The programs, events, and activities at each site were based on community need, interest, and resources. They were, therefore, varied and unique to each site. Collaboration with other community groups and agencies was a primary method of implementation. Clubs utilized the resources and expertise of community groups whose primary mission is service to families.

The five pilot sites were given modest grants to implement and/or document programs, activities, and services, and have reported excellent results. It is not possible here to report on all the programs they implemented, but the following are a few examples:

Challengers Boys & Girls Club of Los Angeles has started a parent participation program and encourages parents to volunteer at the Club. The Club has a Parent Resource Center that provides information and referral and helps with employment, housing, parent education, and legal information. Staff were given forms to use to solicit information from parents and family members about what they wanted. The program involves parents in the community and is considered a success by the Club. The Father Support Group is the result of father-input and planning among united Hispanic and African American fathers.

Photo courtesy of Boys & Girls Clubs of America

There are now monthly programs both for fathers and sons and for fathers and daughters. **JobPlus** is a program that collaborates with a neighborhood job skills development organization to offer training in resume writing, interviewing skills, and employability. Some parents who came in for help stayed as volunteers and are now a part of the Club. **College Corner** is a short-term project for families of high school age Club members who want to go to college. Many of their parents did not go to college and are overwhelmed by the thought of it; they are learning to "buy into" the college experience for children. The direct positive impact is reported to be "astonishing."

Boys & Girls Club of Brockton (Massachusetts) has developed a parents' thrift store as an entrepreneurial empowerment program, and has monthly family education and parent support activities, a father's club, and an organization for families called You're Eligible Too. They report that program start-up required staff time and patience. Then, as parents got involved and up to speed, the programs took off and became successful. The Club has developed a parent education activity to help parents develop the skills needed to tutor and mentor children and to understand the school system. They have helped with graduation parties and school enhancement programming such as Build Your Community. The Club staff report that the Parent Support and Advisory Council took up staff time in the beginning, but that parents are now developing and implementing programs that meet their own needs. The Father Club has required involvement of mothers and caregivers to help encourage paternal involvement.

Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida developed a father/daughter **Valentine Ball** (involving local police as escorts for fatherless girls), started a parenting class, expanded family support in all of its units, has a family night out, and uses a strong parent advisory group. The Club has engaged the surrounding community in providing resources for activities, and reports that staff involvement has been reduced because parents are planning the activities. The Club has successful parenting classes managed and planned by parents in six-week sessions to meet their own needs. Utilizing outside community support, all units of the Club now have family support programs or activities based on open lines of communication wit h parents. Parents were instrumental in expanding this programming to all areas of the Club. Family Night Out is now used to introduce families to different cultural and social events, with parents reaching out to other families to increase the level of involvement. Staff guidance at the beginning results in parents being able to put time and effort into the program. **Boys & Girls Club of Minneapolis** hosts dinners to recognize parent support pro-

jects, conducts cultural celebrations, and hosts a family retreat. They also have a program called **Father on the Move**. The Club has stressed formal recognition of families, reaching goals, and involving business, community, media, and church leaders. Parents, initially resistant, are now interested and respond to recognition. The Club celebrates diversity and has helpful hints for other Clubs that want to conduct such programming. Parents share knowledge about ethnic and cultural holidays with the younger generation. All activities are inter-Club, and socializing is encouraged. **The Family Retreat** is particularly notable as a way for staff to get to know families and discover their strengths. Strong bonds have developed between family members and the Club.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas have several successful programs for parents. Notable among these is the **Dollars and Cents Seminar/Home Buyers Workshop**. Using a parent advisory council, the program is directed at helping families learn how to achieve financial independence and move out of public housing. The Club uses lots of recognition and support to help adults feel safe and get involved. Participation is high: families want this support. The **S.O.S. (Share Our Strength) Nutrition Program** was developed to teach parents how to budget and how to prepare nutritious meals. Children over 12 were allowed to attend the program with parents. Local chefs volunteered to teach nutrition, price comparison, and recipe preparation. The program culminated with a "feast." Parents will conduct future sessions. The **Ready or Not** program helps parents develop skills to deal with youth alcohol use.

The Dallas Club has a family arts and crafts program that involves extended family members and recognizes participants for designing and completing projects. The Club also responded to parents' requests for help in overcoming their lack of computer expertise, offering instruction during non-program hours on computers funded by the City of Dallas. Classes are now held weekly, and computers are made available during non-program hours to families for practice. Parents have produced resumes, and there is lots of encouragement and recognition. Parents now help younger children with computer classes.

Families Say Programs Work

As part of an outside evaluation, the Georgia Academy extensively interviewed 25 families involved at the five pilot sites. Their findings verified the success of the program. Ninety-six percent of the families indicated that they spent more time together as a result of the Family Support Program. All of the families indicated that they would recommend the program to other families in the community. The Georgia Academy also noted that a number of positive collaborations and partnerships had developed between the Club and other community groups, agencies, and institutions. This type of cooperation was beneficial for the participating agencies as well as for the community at large.

In the last quarter of 1997, Boys & Girls Clubs of America held its first Family Support Program Conference with the generous support of The Annie E. Casey Foundation. It was truly a special and historic event. Teams of chief professional officers, board volunteers, and parents of Club members gathered to learn from the experiences of the pilot sites, to be inspired by experts in the field, and to construct action plans on how to further their family support initiatives. The conference was an overwhelming success, and an analysis of conference evaluations showed that participants felt motivated and stimulated by the various sessions and presentations.

What Does The Future Hold?

The demonstrated success of family support programs in the Clubs has been a strong springboard for the expansion of these efforts into more Clubs and for the further enhancement of family support initiatives in the Clubs already implementing them. The issue of welfare reform is on everyone's radar screen, and once again the Annie E. Casey Foundation has stepped up to the plate, providing support for Boys & Girls Clubs of America to work with five new pilot Clubs to develop models for assisting families confronting this transition. In addition, the Achelis Foundation and Bodman Foundation are providing support to develop initiatives designed to continue outreach to fathers and to promote positive fatherhood.

In the longer term, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has identified family involvement as a key area of the strategic plan that will take it into the next millennium. It is clear that more and more Clubs are recognizing parents as important assets to draw on in the Clubs' youth development mission. The executive director of one of the pilot Clubs said, "We have developed a better relationship with parents of our members, they feel closer to us and we to them. It has made it easier to engage them in positive discussions about their children." The benefits for children are significant.

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Notes

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Who Are Today's Youth?

Public Policy To Reflect Youths' Reality

by John A. Calhoun

This country doesn't seem to pay much attention to youth until a troubling incident grabs the headlines. The media portray youth in very negative ways. Listen to Bret Ellis in *George* magazine:

> *[Teens'] predilection for violent crime is at an all-time high, which has inspired a multitude of new laws and regulations that threaten to dismantle the concept of civil liberties in the U.S. . . . Add to this the fact that kids control the entertainment industry with their buying power, not to mention that they lie and cheat more than ever . . . Cheating on an exam? Smoking cigarettes? Shoplifting? You wish. Murder, rape, robbery, vandalism: the overwhelming majority of these crimes are committed by people under 25, and the rate is escalating rapidly . . . "*[1]

People accuse teens of not thinking beyond their hormonal boundaries or about what's beyond tomorrow. Policymakers accuse them of short attention spans, while in defiance of research results, they themselves go for the fast and the short-term, for quick-fix, bumper-sticker policies. Many bills proffered in Congress this year, calling for the reform of juvenile justice policy, mention neither prevention nor justice. Some describe youth as "super-predators." Teens frighten the public, so policymakers offer them food, education, health care, and shelter for $35,000 a year—in prison.

The Rand corporation reports that by the year 2002, 18 percent of California's budget will be spent on corrections and a mere one percent on higher education.[2] Since the present prison binge began in the 1980s, California has built 21 prisons and one university.[3] The violent crime rate in the United States is intolerably high, and yes, violent people must be taken off the streets. But violent crime—and violent crime committed by youth—is dropping. Yet, as *The New York Times* has reported, "Crime keeps On Falling; but Prisons Keep On Filling." Juvenile lockups stand as public policy promises. But where are the companion promises—the after-school programs, mentors, and opportunities for community service?

Is America in the middle of a crime wave? No. Crime fell in the first half of the 1980s and rose in the second half. Now it is again falling. People say that increasing numbers of teenagers will usher in another crime wave in the early part of the next century, a crime wave, which, according to some criminologists, will make today look like Camelot. But demographics are not destiny.

Are kids today more evil? No. Texas' Attorney General Dan Morales once observed that of 1,000 kids, 997 are okay, good, or wonderful. But who drives public fear and election-year policy? Three out of a thousand. Are kids today more violent? No. What is different today is the easy availability of lethal weapons. The violent crime rate has held steady or dropped, but guns change what would have been a broken nose into death. England, which has strict gun control laws, three years ago lost 77 children to gun violence; the United States loses that many in a week—almost three classrooms of children.

This country seems able to formulate only two kinds of policy for youths: one kind controls them (through the criminal justice system) and the other tries to repair them after they get in trouble or are hurt. Each formulation may be appropriate at certain times and places, but neither challenges youth to contribute positively as equal partners. We have not invited youths to sign the social contract.

Two years ago the National Crime Prevention Council commissioned the Harris Organization to poll youth about ways in which crime and violence influence their lives. Half of what they found was not really news—that because of crime, kids occasionally carried weapons, cut classes, chose new friends, and so on. But what was news—and is astounding—is that nine out of 10 of the teens polled said they would volunteer to do something about crime and violence if only they knew what to do. Furthermore, the Independent Sector 1996 survey of Volunteering and Giving Among American Teens showed that an astonishing 59% of teens performed some kind of volunteer service weekly (as opposed to 49% of their adult counterparts).

So much for "super-predators." This volunteerism paints a truer portrait of young people, one that we don't often hear about and rarely see displayed in the media. This portrait shows that they have something that we must tap: a sense of idealism and a desire to be part of something bigger than themselves. The Center for Youth as Resources sees this abundantly in our programs for teens. One program, Youth as Resources, which began a decade ago, asks youth to identify social issues about which they are concerned and design community development programs to address those issues. It then provides them with mini-grants to implement these projects.

The results to date have been astonishing: More than 100,000 teens, from delinquents to honors students, have participated, tackling every social issue about which society is concerned, from homelessness to crime prevention and child abuse. These efforts are sponsored by caring adults from a variety of contexts: churches, schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, dance clubs, probation departments, and so on. Teens have even put their own pain on the altar of service. For example, in one program, pregnant teens wrote and performed before elementary school students an original play about teen pregnancy called *The Waiting Room*. Incarcerated girls have worked with high school students, sharing

Programs Mobilize to Stop Bill S.10

Law Would Return Children To Adult Jails & Prisons

For nearly 25 years, Congress has been protecting America's children from the dangers of adult jails. Now, the 105th Congress is seriously considering a decision to overturn a quarter century of progress. Proposed Senate Bill 10, misnamed "Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Act," would seriously threaten the safety of all children, especially minority children. As it is currently written, S.10 would:

- Allow all children to be put in jails and prisons with adults with weakened protections from adults
- Fail to insure that any of the $500 million in new money it allocates for juvenile crime-related purposes will be spent on prevention
- Make no efforts to prevent gun violence, the root of all of the increase in youth violence. This bill chooses to lock up children, not guns
- Broadly and indiscriminately open up juvenile felony arrest records, significantly impacting the future of hundreds of thousands of our nation's children by limiting their future educational and employment opportunities.

Please call your Senators today at 202/224-3121, and tell them to oppose S.10, or make an appointment to see them when they are back from Washington.

To join an effort among children's advocates, community leaders, parents, and concerned citizens to oppose S.10, call Kim Wade (202/662-3549) or Holly Jackson (202/662-3664) with the Children's Defense Fund Black Community Crusade.

Who Are Today's Youth? (cont.)

with them the tragic results of gang involvement and drug abuse.

Another of our programs, Teens, Crime, and the Community, which is usually offered through schools but sometimes in juvenile justice settings, uses an interactive series of lessons to teach youth how to avoid becoming victims. But the last chapter of the curriculum asks them to become partners, to roll up their sleeves to design and run projects that make their communities safer and better. And they have responded by tutoring, mentoring, running teen courts, cleaning up graffiti, and much, much more.

Said one young man, "I could not believe adults trusted me to do the job. It's hard to describe how I feel. It feels like a new life." Another said, "It's the first time in my life that I've ever been thanked." These words convey a sense of connection, these teens' sense that they are somehow important and needed and that adults cannot solve these problems without them.

Communities across America are seeking approaches to the "youth issue" that are flexible, inexpensive, effective, and exciting. Programs for teens need to connect them positively to adults and enable them to get real work done. They should be adaptable to all types of community institutions and easy to transplant. When working with these programs, adults should provide guidance but be willing to share power with teens and to treat them as if they had brains. They should focus on results, and help with "adult things" like cash, transportation, Robert's Rules of Order, renting a truck, opening a bank account, or signing contracts. Finally, they should be flexible about scheduling (kids can't do things during school hours, when it might be convenient for the adults) and don't forget to provide the pizza!

A year ago I was asked to respond to the Youth Forum in Miami, a group of kids who crafted policies that they needed. I was struck by the modesty of their requests and their willingness to take responsibility. They weren't asking for BMWs, fancy clothes, free education, or a free ride, but rather for parents who would parent, safe schools, the opportunity to serve, or bus transportation to a job. They wanted their community to get together face-to-face and for people to see beyond skin color to what they have in common. They were also irritated at how they are portrayed by the media—always in trouble or troubled. How often does the media report on teens who mentor others or clean up graffiti?

In our august policy discussions, we must always keep in mind the human dimension. One of our Youth as Resources programs is located in one of the most violent places in America, if not the western world—the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago. One project was started by a nine-year-old girl named Tanika Reilly. Her gift is song, and she and her classmates designed a program to sing to older people walled in by crime. This youngster faces trouble daily. Her mother is very young, almost an adolescent herself; she sleeps in a bathtub to avoid gunfire; and she must step over condoms and crack vials and avoid the gangs as she goes about her business. Yet when she received a Youth as Resources minigrant to support her project, she said, "Thank you for allowing me to make my community better."

Unbelievable. "Thank you for allowing me to make my community better." We should be inspired by this capacity for affirmation, for it embodies a philosophy essential to a stable and vital community, namely, that "I am my brother's keeper." It is commitment and idealism like Tanika's that we must nurture, the better angels present even in the most horrendous of situations. Kids want to be their brothers' keepers, and their community's resources. We adults have to wake up and establish policies that will elicit what is best in youth, not simply prepare for the worst. The challenge, then, is to give young people the opportunity to be just that—our brother's keeper, our sister's keeper, our community's keeper.

John Calhoun, former Massachusetts Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services as well as United States Commissioner of the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families under President Carter, is Executive Director of the National Crime Prevention Council and Board President of the Center for Youth as Resources (CYAR). He can be reached at 202/466-6272 (phone), 202/296-1356 (fax), or jack@ncpc.org(e-mail).

Notes

July 1996

[1] Rand Corp. (1994) Research brief. California's new three strikes law: Benefits, costs and alternatives.

[2] Donziger, S.R. "Fear, crime and punishment in the U.S." Tikkun Magazine Vol 12 No. 6

[3] New York Times Sept 20, 1997, pg 1, Section 4

Youths Say . . .

Teens Care About Politics

by Kym Stewart, age 18

Teens and politics. What do you think when you hear those two words? Do they seem like complete opposites—like black and white or left and right? Well, among teens there is a new and growing interest in their government. Programs like Youth and Government, Youth Jury, Moot Court, Model UN, Model Congress, and so on, have been catching the attention of many high school and college students. Students have begun to skip summer sports camps for political seminars and camps.

Why this new interest? Teens have begun to realize that they are the leaders of the future. They want to take part in the government that is ruling over them. Summer political camps like Washington Workshops, Presidential Classroom, and many others teach students about the workings of Congress and how bills get passed. These camps also give students the opportunity to meet not only their own representatives and senators, but other congressmen and congresswomen from all over the nation.

Students attending these camps formulate their own political views and begin to take stands on certain issues and establish their own values. "Many of the programs I have attended have helped me learn how to speak up and voice my views," says Duy Nygen, a junior at Naperville North. Rob Kornada, a senior at Naperville North says, "I learned a lot. I found out I had many opinions on issues that I thought I cared nothing about." "It makes you more aware of politics today and keeps you more involved with society," says Kris Lopatowski, also a senior.

Many people love to blame their government for all the problems they have, but they don't do anything to help change it. They never write letters to congressmen and women, or try to learn more about how the government works. But these students are learning about their government and how to change its negative aspects. In a time when we have so many undereducated citizens and voters, it is refreshing to see teens taking the initiative to educate themselves and take action.

Kym Stewart is a senior at Naperville North High School, Naperville, Illinois.

Teen Outreach Program

By Ira Cutler

Positive youth development relies on several key program components: Youths must develop respectful relationships with caring adults and be offered the opportunity to express themselves, to think and reflect, and to contribute to their community. Youths must be allowed to grow and to feel good about themselves.

While those themes intuitively seem right, few youth programs have been rigorously evaluated over a long enough period of time to convincingly show results. The Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is one of only a few programs with a long enough history of evaluation to have been proven effective. In the 12-year evaluation conducted by the Philiber Research Associates (PRA) and Dr. Joseph Allen, Ph.D.,[1] TOP participants, when compared with another group, demonstrated an 11% lower rate of course failure in school, a 14% lower rate of school suspension and a 33% lower rate of pregnancy.

The evaluation found that the TOP intervention contained many of the critical ingredients of effective youth programming:

- Offers youth a "safe place" to express their innermost thoughts and feelings
- Provides structure volunteer community service
- Helps teens understand and evaluate their future life options
- Allows teens to establish competence and autonomy in a context that maintains their sense of relatedness with important adults
- Gives youth opportunities to take on adult roles in ways that do not undermine parental or school authority structures
- Provides an opportunity to be viewed in a positive role by adults and other youth

TOP brings youth together with their peers, in discussions facilitated by a trained adult, to talk about school, family, friends, relationships, sex, ambitions, their community, and everything else that is on the mind of the teenager. In addition, participants perform community service work. The program lasts for a school year and can be sponsored by schools, community agencies, or a school-community partnership. The program is low in cost—sometimes less than $100 per child per year—and is now offered in over 30 communities across the country.

For more information about TOP, contact the Cornerstone Consulting Group, One Greenway Plaza, Suite 550, Houston TX 77049, 713/627-2332 (phone), 713/627-3006 (fax).

[1] *Preventing Teen Pregnancy and Academic Failure: Experimental Evaluation of a Developmentally-Based Approach*, Dr. Joseph Allen, University of Virginia, Dr. Susan Philliber and Scott Herring, Philliber Research Associates, Dr. Gabriel P. Kuperminic, Yale University.

Keeping the Glass Full

Prevention Plus Promotion Equals Youth Success

by Karen Pittman

Concerns about youth problems and youth outcomes continue to grow, but far too few questions are asked about adult and community responsibility for intervention, prevention, or development. Perhaps this is because youth problem prevention, youth development, and community development are seen as competing priorities rather than inseparable goals.

Preventing Youth Problems: The Glass Half-Empty

In talking about prevention over the past decade, we have applied a basic public health model that suggests we have to treat those who have a problem or disease, modify the attitudes and habits of those at risk of contracting the problem because of their behavior, and educate those not yet engaged. The public health model is a triage approach that says we have to do these three things and that just doing one or two is not enough.

The model has merit and, beginning with substance abuse, has been heavily applied to the array of youth problems. However, while it has brought legitimacy to the idea of prevention, this model is not enough. When applied to more complex individual issues such as violence and unemployment, we are talking in terms of *problems*. But no matter how early we commit to addressing them, there is something fundamentally limiting about thinking about things exclusively in terms of problems—especially people. In the final analysis, we do not assess people in terms of problems (or lack thereof), but in terms of their potential.

Case in point: If I introduced an employer to a young person I worked with by saying, "Here's Katib. He's not a drug user. He's not in a gang. He's not a dropout. He's not a teen father. Please hire him." The employer would respond, "That's great, but what does he know, what can he do?" If we cannot define—and give young people opportunities to define—the skills, values, attitudes, knowledge, and commitments we *want*—and do not give young people ample opportunities to define—the skills, values, attitudes, knowledge, and commitments we want with as much force as we can define what we do *not* want, we will fail to get it. Prevention is an inadequate goal. Problem-free is not fully prepared.

Developing Positive Youth Outcomes: The Glass Half-Full

What are the goals we as a society have for young people? Beyond the specific goal of keeping them out of trouble, the policy literature usually contains broad statements about how we want young people to be good citizens, good neighbors, good workers, and good parents.

Prevention is an inadequate goal. Problem-free is not fully prepared.

The academic and programmatic literatures usually push farther, articulating general lists of competencies that we want young people to achieve. These go beyond academic competence. Numerous commissions and organizations, including the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, define a generic set of competencies that include vocational, physical, emotional, civic, social, and cultural competencies.

The problem is that we have not established developmental benchmarks or defined the steps needed to acquire this fuller range of competencies. Success is still largely defined as the absence of problems (e.g., pregnancy, violent or delinquent behavior, gang involvement, open racism). Shifting goals from gang prevention to civic involvement requires a fairly dramatic shift in strategies.

But this is only half the challenge. Paralleling the broadening of our definition of expected competencies has to be an acceptance of the importance of a second set of outcomes—those that allow young people to be not only competent, but connected, caring, and committed. In addition to skills, young people must have a solid sense of safety and structure, membership and belonging, mastery and sense of purpose, responsibility and self-worth.

These basic needs are not peculiar to youth. Safety, structure, belonging, purpose—these are the essential elements of Maslow's basic needs hierarchy that we all learned in Psychology 101. Defining youth outcomes solely in terms of the competencies—the skills, behaviors, and knowledge—that we want them to have and not also in terms of the broader psychosocial components that make them confident young men and women limits our strategies and undermines our chances of success. It is foolish to continue to ignore the fundamental interconnection between the development of confidence and the development and application of competence.

Process: The Dynamics of Youth Development

In thinking about vulnerable, disadvantaged, or marginalized youth (or families or communities), the "fix-problems-first" assumption is antithetical to the dynamic of development. While problems must be addressed, it is a commitment to development—the offering of relationships, networks, challenges, opportunities to contribute—that motivates growth and change.

No one is inspired when they walk in the door and are greeted with "We're here to fix you." But that is what we do. We do it to young people. We do it to families. We do it to communities. We assume that if young people or families have problems, that these have to be fixed before there is any interest or justification for exploring opportunities for development. "Low-risk" youth in "low-risk" communities get orchestras, summer camps, accelerated learning opportunities. "High-risk" youth in "high-risk" communities get substance abuse prevention counseling and diversion programs. But until there is a challenge, there is no reason that any person, young or old, is going to be sufficiently engaged to change.

Unfortunately, funding dictates services, and this has led to a crazy quilt of problem-specific interventions that often operate independently and inefficiently. We have reduced the challenge of youth development to a series of problems to be solved, leaving the core inputs for development—supports and opportunities—to be addressed in a catch-as-catch-can fashion. Substance abuse prevention, pregnancy prevention, dropout prevention, and violence prevention programs all have separate funding and separate evaluation measures. But the core of what is offered in these programs is the same: opportunities for membership, social skill-building, participation, clear norms, adult-youth relationships, and relevant information and services.

Supports, Opportunities, and Services: The Ingredients for Youth Development

The literature on factors influencing youth development suggests that there are seven key inputs that influence youth development. *Places* are important. Young people need a stable *place* is theirs and in which they feel safe. This place can—and should—be home, but it can also be a religious organization, a school, or a community center. Young people need access to *basic care and services* that are appropriate, affordable, and, if necessary, confidential. Essential also, are *high quality instruction and training*. Places, services, and instruction frame the resources that families and communities offer youth. But it is the supports and opportunities offered in these settings that are critical. Young people must to have opportunities to develop *sustained, caring relationships* and *social and strategic networks*. They need *challenging experiences* that are appropriate, diverse, and sufficiently intense. Finally, they need *opportunities for real participation* and involvement in the full range of community life—not just picking up trash on Saturdays. All young people, affluent or low-income, above grade or out-of school, need a mix of services, supports, and opportunities in order to stay engaged.

This list of inputs is very simple and sensible. There are two reasons, however, that we do not use it to guide decisions about policy. First, we ignore what is known about human motivation and development, insisting that youth must be "fixed" before they can be developed, and second, we focus too heavily on structuring services to solve problems and too little on strengthening supports and opportunities to increase potential.

Communities: The Context for Development

There is a sizable body of academic and practical knowledge to back up the basic argument that services alone do not ensure development. The research on resilient children and youth, for example, suggests that three factors contribute to these children's ability to "beat the odds": a strong relationship with a caring adult, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation. In addition, these children have a sense of connectedness and confidence that allows them to develop competencies.

While programs and organizations can have an enormous impact on youths' lives, this impact is either amplified or dampened by the quality and congruence of what else is going on in young people's families, peer groups, and neighborhoods. There are, as always, young people who "beat the odds," but it is family and community that determine the odds.

Young people grow up in a set of imbedded networks. The complexity and unevenness of adolescent development and the need for constancy in relationships, environments, and engagement means that those best positioned to influence development are the "natural actors" in youths' lives—family, peers, neighbors, and community institutions.

Ideally, children and youth have their broadest, strongest, and most permanent connections to family. Their development is enhanced when they are further supported by peers and neighbors; attached to an array of community organizations; engaged in school; exposed to work; and connected, as needed, with professionals who provide or broker for basic services such as health care, housing, protection, and social services.

Any and all of these networks can provide the key inputs needed for healthy youth development. In some communities, the networks are so well equipped and con-

Common Themes in Prevention Programs

Skill Building
Building social skills, problem-solving skills and communication skills.

Participation
Engaging youth through offering real opportunities for participation (e.g. youth led discussions, real choices), and leadership (e.g. youth as peer counselors, tutors, contributors)

Norms and Expectations
Establishing new norms and expectations for behavior that are sanctioned by the group

Adult-Youth Relationships
Establishing deeper and different ways for youth and adults to relate through the creation of different structures for interaction and specific training for adult leaders

Information and Services
Providing problem-specific information and services or access to services

nected that a young person can get all that is needed naturally from family, neighbors, and an assortment of informal or individually negotiated experiences. In other communities, because these inputs are not available in sufficient quantity and quality, essential services, opportunities, and supports may need to be created. The critical question is how.

Strategies: Linking Prevention and Development

The seven strategies listed suggest how we might begin to link prevention and development approaches in ways that answer the question of how to create services, opportunities, and supports:

1. **Broaden the goals of youth development.** When we talk about problems, we end up talking about programs and services, and we think about interventions in discrete blocks of time. When we talk about development, we end up talking about supports and opportunities, and recognize the importance of continuity, challenge, and choice. Applying what we know about youth development suggests some obvious strategies. We have to broaden the goals of youth development beyond school and jobs to include health, social, and civic competencies. While achieving various competencies is important for youth, we must also help youth develop the confidence and connectedness needed to use those competencies well.

2. **Support programmatic change.** We need to articulate better the supports and interventions needed to achieve those goals. And we have to acknowledge and address the developmental and environmental contexts that affect outcomes. To counterbalance the statements of what we should do, we need some more practical statements about programmatic changes that would signal a shift from problem-prevention to youth development.

3. **Target without trapping.** Resources need to be targeted to maximize impact and to match the needs of young people with the resources available. But we should avoid making judgments too quickly about who needs resources and what resources are most needed.

4. **Evaluate the whole.** When we focus too heavily on a single problem, we weaken the possibilities both of documenting impact (by tracking only a narrow set of outcomes) and having impact (by focusing too narrowly on a specific set of inputs). Anyone who works intensely on a discrete youth problem (e.g., teen pregnancy) learns quickly that the problem is intertwined with education, with opportunity structures, with family connection and support, and with a range of developmental issues that cannot be ignored if any intervention is to be successful. Programs should be evaluated against some basic outcomes that reflect the full set of competencies and connections desired.

5. **Hold institutions accountable for improving family and community outcomes.** Due in part to expectations from funders and evaluators, programs have a tendency to reach over schools, community organizations, neighbors, and families to work directly with youth. This leads to such strong dependence on the program that as soon as the intervention stops, things revert. If we consider that youth develop within a ring of supports (see model), it makes sense for an intervention at any level to assist and support the next ring in. Why aren't health services, social services, and the juvenile justice system working with the schools for the early identification of those who need help and with follow-up work in the school setting? Why aren't schools helping community organizations to work with parents, find parents, develop homework assistance techniques, and understand better what's going on in the community? Why aren't community organizations helping parents and neighbors be the role models, resources, and key informal supports that are so critically needed? And finally, why aren't parents and neighbors insisting that young people play a more active role in their communities?

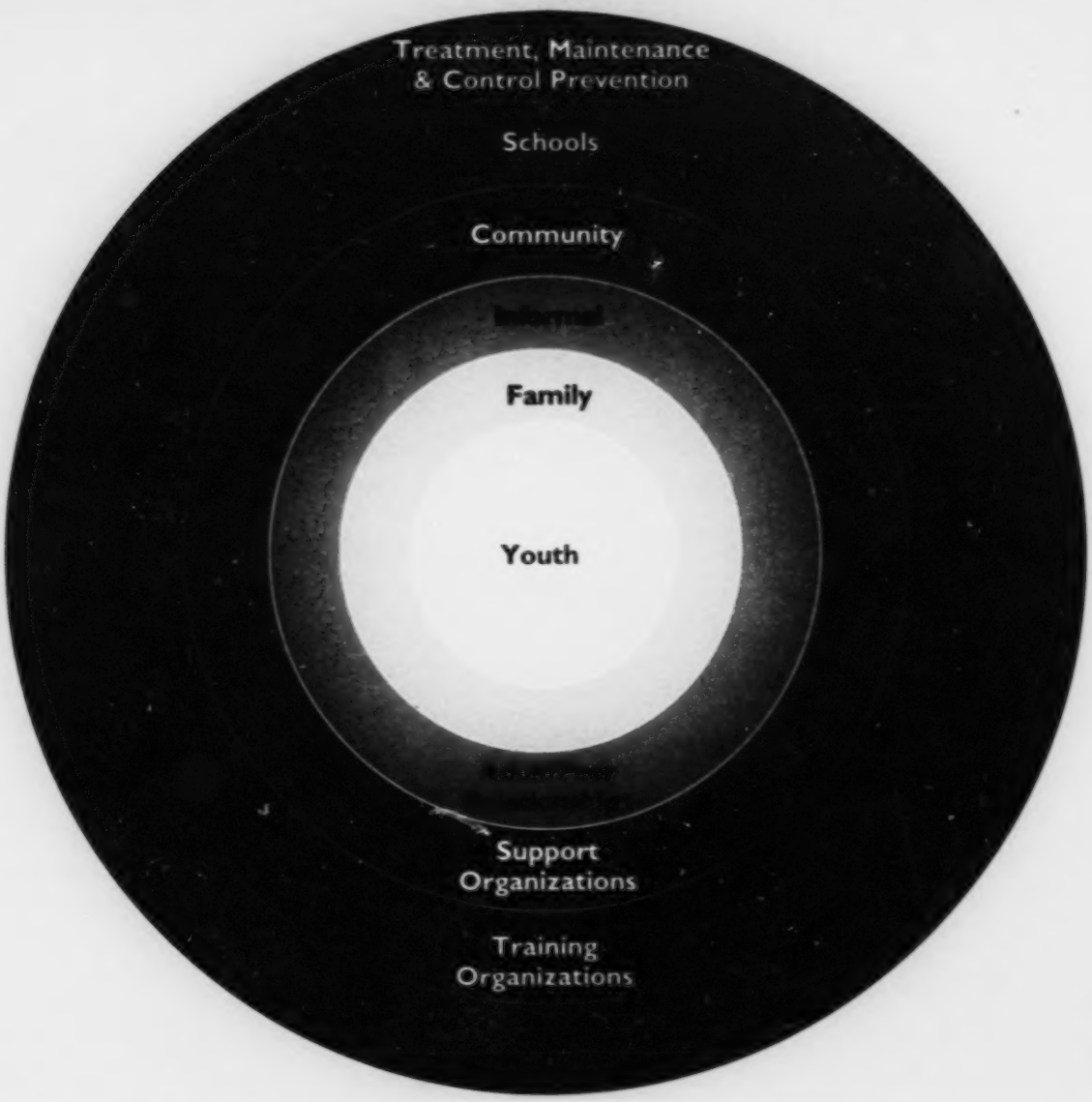
6. **Strengthen the inner rings.** Young people grow up in families. They have informal support groups of peers and neighbors around them. Their neighborhoods are full, one hopes, of permanent community organizations such as religious organizations, community centers, recreation departments, libraries, youth centers, and post-secondary institutions. From the perspective of development, we should be investing in these community organizations in order to support families and neighbors and communities. Working to strengthen these organizations will provide permanent support for youth that will continue beyond any single intervention.

7. **Invest in core supports and see community organizations as catalysts as well as service providers.** Programs must certainly address the short-term needs of the youth in a community. If the neighborhood lacks safe places for young people to go and productive activities for them to engage in after school and on weekends, then such places need to be created. But programs must also engage in the long-term task of helping families, neighbors, and communities support young people and the environments in which they grow. This requires an investment by institutions at the broader level not only in short-lived, problem-specific programs, but in community organizations; in civic, cultural, and neighborhood associations; and in the larger economic, physical, and social infrastructures. Funders, for example, should be prepared to invest as much in strengthening the administrative, staffing, and financial capacity of community organizations as they are to invest in particular programs, just as the organizations themselves should be prepared to assess what is needed to promote the development of all youth in the neighborhood, not just those youth who join or use particular programs.

   How often have we heard youth organizations lament that they can get short-term, targeted funding for substance abuse prevention or gang intervention, but struggle to support the core programs (e.g. recreation, outreach), maintain the facility, and train and reward the staff? How often have we seen lists of programs working in communities but still seen scores of young people on the streets, many of whom are unaffiliated with any program or institution?

In addition to skills, young people must have a solid sense of safety and structure, membership and belonging, mastery and sense of purpose, responsibility and self-worth.

Supportive Community: A Youth-Centered Perspective



Programs and interventions are needed. But the long-term task is to help families, neighbors, and communities nurture, support, and demand excellence from their youth. This requires sustained investments in community institutions, associations, and infrastructures.

Conclusion

The mistake that we make all too often is to come in, put a program in place, and believe it will solve the problem on its own. With full understanding of the constraints involved, I have to argue that all of us—advocates, policymakers, funders, researchers, service providers—must make sure that our work takes place as a natural part of family and community life. When introduced into or developed in communities, programs should follow one of two roads: They should either become a part of the community—permanent, indigenous institutions—or they should work to strengthen the families, neighbors, and community institutions sufficiently so that the program is no longer needed.

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What Makes Youth Development Programs Work?

Two National Efforts Share Best Practices

by Edward DeJesus and Donna Walker James

In an era in which many have claimed that "nothing works" for young people, many youth advocacy and youth-serving organizations are working to provide solid evidence of success in areas where anecdotal knowledge and tremendous faith and hard work have long been the primary "tests" of effectiveness. Two organizations here describe their efforts to identify effective youth employment, training, and education initiatives. The National Youth Employment Coalition's Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) initiative recognizes youth employment and training initiatives that demonstrate effective practices in the four broad categories of Quality Management, Youth Development, Workforce Development, and Evidence of Success. The American Youth Policy Forum examined and summarized evaluations of various youth initiatives (employment and training, education, mentoring, college access, youth and community development initiatives), many showing successful outcomes. These summaries are published in *Some Things* DO *Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices*.

Among other important qualities of effective programs (such as quality management and strong connections to employers), these organizations have found many specific youth development practices that contribute to program effectiveness. These include nurturing relationships between youth and caring adults, developing a sense of group membership, promoting youth as resources, and sustaining services over the long term.

Youth Development

There is increasing recognition of the fact that initiatives serving young people, particularly youth employment and training initiatives, need to think about youth not just as clients, but as individuals undergoing a rapid, intensive and, for them, frequently confusing phase of growth and development. Youth development initiatives should reflect a recognition that young people, particularly between the ages of 14 and 25, vary tremendously in their growth rates and maturity levels; that they are simultaneously struggling to develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally; that their growth and accomplishments in these areas are usually uneven and unpredictable; and that their needs for challenge and support change swiftly.

Photo courtesy of PEPNet

At a 1997 PEPNet recognition ceremony, U.S. Department of Labor youth from recognized programs celebrate with Deputy Secretary of Labor Kitty Higgins.

Successful youth employment, training, and education initiatives incorporate youth development thinking, principles, and activities to provide varied and ongoing opportunities for young people to grow, mature, and connect successfully to the world of work and/or higher education. Effective youth employment, training, and education initiatives connect young people to caring adults; give positive, consistent and constructive support; develop a sense of group membership; engage family and peers; promote youth as resources; build youths' responsibility and leadership; foster a sense of self; offer individualized age- and stage-appropriate activities, and provide support services over time.

The Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet)

The National Youth Employment Coalition's (NYEC) Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) initiative aims to move beyond the anecdotal evidence of success frequently relied upon in the youth employment and training field by identifying and recognizing youth employment and training initiatives that meet criteria of effective practice. PEPNet has laid out criteria of effective practice and uses its recognition process to identify practices of effective youth employment and training initiatives from which the youth employment and training field can learn and improve.

The development of PEPNet began in August 1995 with a retreat for a "working group" of youth experts, representing youth employment and training practitioners, employers, educators, policy analysts, and researchers from across the United States.[1] They wrestled with some knotty issues: How do we define "best," "effective," or "promising" practice? How can we include a broad range of different youth initiatives and still develop a manageable set of principles? How can we establish the credibility of youth development practice? How can the most effective practices be identified, and how can the identification process itself inform and enrich the policy debate? The retreat group was motivated by those superlative youth employment and training initiatives in the field that connected to and aided young people living in poor communities in urban and rural settings.

The working group arrived at four categories that research and field experience suggests youth employment and training initiatives should focus on:

1. **Quality Management:** Strong, stable and effective management by the organization operating the initiative
2. **Youth Development:** Well-conceived and effectively implemented approaches to youth development
3. **Workforce Development:** Clear emphasis on the development of skills, knowledge, and competencies that lead to jobs and careers
4. **Evidence of Success.** The working group produced two closely linked documents: a Self-Assessment, which any

employment and training initiative serving youth between the ages of 14 and 25 may use to get a picture of its strengths and weaknesses (distributed year round), and a PEPNet application package (distributed each spring). Youth-serving initiatives can work through a self-assessment alone, apply to be recognized by PEPNet, or do both. Each application is reviewed by teams of at least three professionals from a panel of 50 youth employment and training experts.[3] In the first two years, about one-third (32) of the applications were chosen for recognition.

In order to better assist the youth employment and training community with the identification of best practices, NYEC has created an Index to PEPNet Effective Practices, which has been published as part of *Lessons Learned: 32 Effective Youth Employment Initiatives*. The Index is designed to allow initiatives to identify a long list of specific examples of effective practice—behaviors, strategies, techniques, methods, approaches—used by effective youth employment and training initiatives to achieve positive outcomes for youth. Based on information contained in the applications of PEPNet awardees, the Index is not all-inclusive. It is designed to identify the range of practices incorporated in effective initiatives and to index the practices to facilitate access to information. The examples in the Index are specific, detailed, pragmatic, manageable, replicable, tested, and real.[4]

Although the concept of "youth development" is frequently mentioned in connection with youth employment and training initiatives, historically there has been little systemic effort to incorporate youth development practices into youth workforce preparation activities. While many employment and training initiatives speak broadly of developing and supporting the whole young person, the concept needs to be made more tangible and clear. PEPNet achieves this by requiring initiatives seeking recognition to provide evidence that youth are involved in the continuing development of the initiative, that staff expectations help youth develop and grow, that schedules and services are convenient and suitable, and that efforts are taken to tailor activities to youth at different ages and stages of their development.

Some Things Do Make a Difference for Youth

The American Youth Policy Forum has also contributed to identification of effective initiatives and basic principles of effective practice in the youth field. The Forum, too, was concerned with the assertion that "nothing works" for young people. The Forum, a nonpartisan professional development organization serving the policy community in the fields of education, training for employment, and youth development, was struck by the sharp disparity between the gloomy predictions of the media and many policymakers and their own vivid, often heart-warming, experiences in visiting actual schools and initiatives in communities around the United States. The work of many thousands of talented and committed teachers, counselors, parents, employers, program developers, and managers needed documenting. The record of children and youth whose lives have been transformed is too striking to warrant the notion that society cannot improve the life chances of young people, including those most seriously at risk of failure.

With these thoughts in mind, the Forum produced summaries of the growing body of evaluations which measure youth program efficacy with increasing precision, confidence and clarity. The resulting publication, *Some Things* DO *Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices*, depicts a field that continues to search for, and find, effective ways to move youth into responsible citizenship, labor market success, and self-sufficiency. Its findings underscore the rich potential of investing in the future of our young people. In an era of pragmatism and limited resources, it illustrates the varied choices we now have available for making those investments more soundly than ever before.

Some Things DO Make a Difference summarizes 69 evaluations of 49 youth interventions, including employment and training, education, mentoring, college access, youth development, and community development initiatives. The evaluations summarized were recommended for inclusion by a distinguished roster of academic researchers, professional evaluators, and youth practitioners. These summaries were designed to be readable, accessible, brief, and of a consistent format for the purpose of sharing good news about youth, while at the same time not suppressing neutral, inconclusive, or negative findings. Each summary provides an overview and key components of the initiative, information on the population and study methodology, evidence of effectiveness, contributing factors, and contact information. Each of the

(continued on page 27)

More Resources For Your Work With Youths

There are many ways to access youth development resources through PEPNet, the National Youth Employment Coalition's Promising and Effective Practices Network, and through the American Youth Policy Forum.

• Get recognition for your program's success.
PEPNet recognizes effective youth employment and training initiatives in four categories: Quality Management, Youth Development, Workforce Development, and Evidence of Success. This year's recognition ceremony will take place at the US Dept. of Labor in September 1998. Applications are due June 12, 1998.

• Evaluate your own program's practices.
Conduct the PEPNet self-assessment designed for youth development programs.

• Receive more information.
For a copy of A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices, send $10 (includes shipping and handling) to the American Youth Policy Forum. A press release can be found on the Forum's web site.

For a copy of *Lessons Learned: 32 Effective Youth Employment Initiatives*, send a 10 x 13", self-addressed, stamped envelope ($3.00 postage) to NYEC.

For a complete index of 1996 and 1997 youth initiatives, visit the NYEC web site.

PEPNet and NYEC
Web Site: www.nyec.org
Phone: 202/659-1064
Fax: 202/775-9731
Address:
NYEC
1001 Connecticut Ave., NW Suite 728
Washington, DC 20036

American Youth Policy Forum
Web Site: www.aypf.org
Phone: 202/775-9731
Fax: 202/775-9733
Address:
American Youth Policy Forum
1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 719
Washington, DC 20036

Youths Take Positive Action

Programs Give Youths a Chance

Top: The National Society of Black Engineers sponsors a Rocket Club at Stedman Elementary School.

Bottom: Tavon, a member of Bresee Youth in the South Central and Mid-Wilshire neighborhoods in Los Angeles, gives his counselor a kiss. Bresee Youth concentrates on education and employment. The program has an employment service, a computer lab, a store, and a homework lab.

Top, right: Kids and mentors from Friends of the Children, in Portland, Oregon, play touch football.

Bottom, right: Through Parents & Children Together (PACT) boys and girls living in the KPT Housing Project in Honolulu, Hawaii, have a golf lesson taught by a pro.

These photos and others are part of a nationwide photo exhibit tour and public education campaign, Pursuing the Dream: What Helps Children and Their Families Succeed. The campaign includes a photo book that shows community-based programs in action, and is a collaboration among FRCA, award-winning photographer Stephen Shames, and Aperture Foundation. For information on how to get involved or bring the exhibit to your community, contact FRCA.

Photos © 1997 Stephen Shames / Matrix

Photo: 1997 Stephen Shames, Matrix

Effective Programs In Youth Development

Work Appreciation for Youth (WAY)
The Children's Village
Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. 10522

Differences in ages, capability, and development are accommodated by offering a sequenced program through which youth move from level to level when they are ready and able. Whether a youth can move up the WAY ladder, from Levels I and II to Levels III and IV, is determined by periodic performance evaluations on work sites and in living areas, assessments by counselors and other Children's Village staff, and the Youths own interests.

Recognized by PEPNet in 1997

Contact: Geraldine Alpert, Ph.D., Director of Research and Program Evaluation, 914/693-0600, ext. 1596 (phone), 914/693-1373 (fax), GALPERT515@aol.com (e-mail).

Milwaukee Community Service Corps (MCSC)
1150 E. Brady Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

The mission of MCSC is to promote the virtue of work and the ethic of social responsibility. This mission is carried out by integrating work, education, job training, career exploration, life skills, and personal growth. The completion of community service projects is integral to the MCSC program. Once hired by MCSC, corpsmembers are assigned to one of four programs, with special attention given to their individual occupational interests. The four programs include: MCSC Crew, AmeriCorps, Youth Apprenticeship, and YouthBuild. MCSC Crew members perform a range of community services and get experience and training in a wide range of skills, including construction, housing renovation, landscaping and human service. They receive hourly wages and have opportunities to advance to Assistant Crew Leader and Crew Leader. All MCSC corpsmembers are provided with academic instruction to help them obtain their G.E.D. or continue towards postsecondary education.

Corpsmembers also receive life skills instruction in Working for a Living, Self-Discovery, Learning from Human Service Work, Building Healthy Communities, and Acting for Positive Change.

Recognized by PEPNet in 1996

Contact: Bailey Smith, Special Assistant to Director, 414/276-6272 (phone), 414/276-7330 (fax), mcsc@execpc.com (e-mail).

Manufacturing Technology Partnership (MTP)
UAW/General Motors Flint Metal Center
G-2238 W. Bristol Road
Flint, MI 48453

The United Auto Workers/General Motors program is a two-year school-to-career transition program whose purpose is to help prepare selected high school students for skilled trades careers. Five full-time UAW skilled trades journey persons each act as mentor for seven students participating in the program. Each mentor is responsible for introducing the student to the manufacturing process and for developing projects that incorporate the reading and math skills necessary to pass the entry level test for a skilled trades' apprenticeship.

In identifying mentors, MTP looks for individuals who can develop close relationships with students, exhibit commitment and friendship, and share real job knowledge and experience with the students. With a host of volunteers lined up for positions at the Flint Metal Center, it was not hard to find the right people for the job. Training was, however, very important. Through collaboration with a local postsecondary educational institution, a mentoring training course was developed specifically for mentors in the MTP initiative.

The Upjohn Institute's evaluation of the first two MTP classes followed program participants and a comparison group of students for each MTP class through October 1995. Results showed that, relative to the comparison groups, MTP students were more likely to be employed at higher average wages; had higher average GPAs and similar or higher class ranks; had considerably higher levels of vocational credits and more math and science credits; and had higher (but not staustically significant) average postsecondary education attendance rates.

Recognized by PEPNet in 1996. *See Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth*, p. 30.

Contact: Bob Moorish, Salaried Personnel/ Joint Activities, 810/236-5676 (phone), 810/236-2695 (fax)

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America (BBBS)
230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107-1538

The local affiliates of this 93 year-old program are autonomously funded to support one-to-one mentoring matches between volunteer adults and young people. The following features aid the development and maintenance of BBBS quality matches: stringent guidelines for screening volunteers; an orientation for volunteers to explain program requirements and rules; a matching process; and supervision to support effective matches. The effectiveness of the matches is likely due to a substantial time commitment by both the volunteer and the youth—both agree to meet two to four times per month for at least a year, with a typical meeting lasting four hours.

Public/Private Ventures conducted baseline interviews of applicants to eight BBBS agencies and then randomly assigned the youth to treatment and control groups. On the basis of reinterviews of sample members after 18 months, youth participating in BBBS (compared to members of the control group) were estimated to be: 46 percent less likely to initiate drug use (minority Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 70 percent less likely to initiate drug use); 27 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use (minority Little Sisters were 54 percent less likely); and 32 percent less likely to hit someone. Participants also reported that they: felt more competent about doing their schoolwork; skipped 52 percent fewer days of school; skipped 37 percent fewer classes; improved 3 percent in grade point averages (a surprise finding for a non-academic intervention program), improved the quality of relationships with their parents, and lied to their parents less.

Listed in *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth*, p. 101

Contact: Thomas M. McKenna, National Executive Director, BBBS, 215/567-7000 (phone), 215/567-0394 (fax)
Maxine Sherman, Communications Manager, Public/Private Ventures, One Commerce Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103, 215/557-4400 (phone), 215/557-4469 (fax)

Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP)
c/o Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Inc.
1415 Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122

QOP, located in Philadelphia, Oklahoma, San Antonio, TX, Saginaw, MI, and Milwaukee, WI, is a year-round, multiyear, comprehensive service program for disadvantaged youth (all from families receiving food stamps and public assistance). Twenty-five disadvantaged students in each community are randomly selected to enter the program beginning in ninth grade and continuing through four years of high school. QOP is operated by community-based organizations. The program focuses on educational activities (tutoring, homework assistance, computer-assisted instruction) and development activities (life and family skills; planning for the future, including postsecondary education and jobs). Community service is stressed. The commitment of staff to students for four years and beyond and the continuity of services over time are considered very significant factors in the program's success. The program's unofficial motto is "Once in QOP, always in QOP."

Brandeis University researchers studied QOP at four sites and found that, relative to a control group, QOP students graduated from high school more often (63 vs. 42 percent), dropped out of school less often (23 vs. 50 percent), went on to postsecondary education more often (42 vs. 15 percent), attended a four-year college more often (18 vs. 5 percent), attended a two-year institution more often (19 vs. 9 percent), and became teen parents less often (24 vs. 38 percent). QOP participants also more often took part in community projects, were volunteer tutors, counselors or mentors, and gave time to nonprofit, charitable, school or community groups.

Listed in *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth*, p. 123.

Contact: C. Benjamin Lattimore, Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Inc., 1415 Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122, 215/236-4500, ext. 251 (phone), 215/236-7480 (fax)

Evaluator: Andrew Hahn, Center for Human Resources, Heller Graduate School, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA 02254-9110, 617/736-3774 (phone), 617/736-3851 (fax).

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initiatives evaluated are published; supported by major legislation or foundation initiatives; nationwide, multistate, or statewide; and pilot or demonstration programs. The evaluations were generally conducted by reputable third-party researchers and well-known authors in the youth field.

As summaries were completed, they were sent to external reviewers. Reviewers provided, as requested, numerous thoughtful reasons why some studies might be excluded from the publication. These included the absence of:

1. A control or comparison group
2. An adequate sample size
3. Quantifiable participant impact data
4. Third-party or arms-length evaluators
5. A focus on youth
6. An unbiased participant selection process
7. Accessible and readable data

Taking into consideration the reviewers' concerns regarding the inclusion of studies (most of which met all or most of these criteria, but some which did not), the American Youth Policy Forum decided to include all the summaries because they provide a record of the evolution over the past 15 years of youth initiative evaluation, and because together they make a strong argument for further investment in high-quality, comprehensive, long-term, and controlled evaluation in the youth field. The summaries provide useful information on program design and principles even when the findings are inconclusive.

Best Practices in Youth Development

In analyzing and summarizing the evaluations in *Some Things* DO *Make a Difference*, a clear picture emerged of repeated practices which consistently led to success. Although evaluators often were hesitant or unable to attribute specific successes to specific practices, in aggregate, successful initiatives tended to have some or all of the following characteristics:

- adult support, structure, and expectations
- creative forms of learning
- a combination of guidance and rich connections to the workplace
- support and follow-up
- youth as resources
- quality implementation

The set of characteristics identified in *Some Things* DO *Make a Difference* is strikingly similar to the criteria developed by the PEPNet working group (see sidebar). Both affirm that youth development is a key element of effective practice for youth employment, training, and education initiatives, and there is substantial evidence of what works. Building knowledge of effective youth development is one of the ways we give youth employment, training, and education initiatives the tools to help young people develop into self-sufficient adults.

Donna Walker James is Senior Program Associate with the American Youth Policy Forum, 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 719, Washington, DC 20036, 202/775-9731 (phone), 202/775-9733 (fax), www.aypf.org (web site).

Edward DeJesus is Director of PEPNet, 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 728, Washington DC 20006, 202/659-1064, 202/775-9733 fax

Note

More than 75 youth service organizations, five foundations, and the US Dept. of Labor collectively donated more than 5,000 hours of services to the realization of PEPNet. These services included participating in the PEPNet Working Group, reviewing PEPNet applications, distributing information about PEPNet at forums and through local networks, interviewing PEPNet applicants, and collecting and analyzing data.

Keys to Success

Successful programs point to a number of effective practices in youth development. In the search for best practices, two key efforts—the National Youth Employment Coalition's Promising & Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) and the American Youth Policy Forum—turned up many of the same answers. The findings of the American Youth Policy Forum are published in *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices.*

Best Practices in Youth Development Activities

PEPNet	American Youth Policy Forum
Nurturing relationships between youth and caring adults	Adult support, structure, and expectations A caring adult support person or mentor; time to develop trust and relationships Caring support coupled with set boundaries (structure) and personal responsibility
Placing high expectations on youth and staff	High expectations; challenging and relevant to young person's needs and interests
Engaging family and peers in organized activities	
Building youths' responsibility and leadership skills	Youth as resources
Offering individualized age- and stage- appropriate activities	Age-appropriate activities tied to knowledge of youth development
Developing a sense of group membership	Small, family-like settings
Fostering a sense of identity and self	Youth as resources
Sustaining services over time	Support and follow-up Case management; individual development plans, faithfully implemented On-going student/youth assessment for improved instruction or service delivery A continuum of activities that build positively over time

Mobilizing Communities to Build Youth Assets

How Family Support Can Help

by **Peter C. Scales**

From Alaska to Florida, Minnesota to Texas, communities nationwide are mobilizing to intentionally build youth developmental assets. Developmental assets are the building blocks all youth need to succeed in life. Search Institute's research with more than 350,000 6th-12th graders in more than 600 U.S. communities, large and small, has identified 40 assets that all youth need. We have organized these assets into eight broad categories: Support, Boundaries and Expectations, Empowerment, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity. Families play powerful roles in building these assets.When young people have a high number of assets, they're not only less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse or early, unprotected sexual intercourse; they're also more likely to do positive things such as succeed at school, value racial diversity, and lend a helping hand to others.[1] Unfortunately, our studies show that the average youth has only about half of them.

The power of these assets, and their relative absence in young people's lives, is inspiring hundreds of communities to become involved in a movement to fundamentally change how they think about and relate with youth. The Healthy Communities–Healthy Youth initiative has now formally taken hold in more than 300 communities across the country, and more are joining their ranks every day. At its core, this movement is about everyone in a community—families, schools, businesses, government, youth organizations, family support and resource centers, civic groups, media, health care providers, congregations, and neighbors—working together to create a healthy environment in which youths' assets can flourish.

We don't know what proportion of these community-wide initiatives family support organizations are playing leading roles, but we do know how much potential there is. Two years ago, Search Institute did a national survey of family support workers in partnership with FRCA. We looked at how family support workers are addressing the needs of families with young adolescents. Only 46% of those family support workers said there was a coalition in their community that tried to address the needs of families with middle school youth. Moreover, less than half were collaborating regularly with parent organizations, volunteer groups, businesses, congregations, or other community resources. There are hopeful signs, however; 66% of those without coalitions said they'd be interested in participating in one, and more than half were collaborating regularly with schools, health care providers, youth-serving organizations, and local or state governments.[2]

The foundations for family support involvement in Healthy Communities Healthy Youth initiatives are substantial. In addition to about half of family support organizations participating in community coalitions or collaborating with other youth-oriented organizations already, the discipline of family support is philosophically aligned very closely with positive youth development. The principles of family support practice dovetail with the principles of positive youth development practice to a degree that is uncommon for many other kinds of organizations.

Given their guiding philosophy, family support organizations should be among the natural leaders of such coalitions. When we look statistically to see what kinds of relationships and opportunities (external assets) best predict whether youth have the values, skills, competencies, and beliefs they need to succeed (internal assets), we find that *family support, positive family communication, family boundary and expectation-setting,* and *parent involvement in schooling* all play direct roles in meaningfully predicting 17 of the 20 internal assets we have identified, and they play indirect roles in building all 20. The family support role is especially strong in helping young people develop high levels of:

1. *Achievement and motivation*
2. *Skills* such as peaceful conflict resolution, resistance, and planning and decision-making skills
3. *Positive identity*, including positive self-esteem, a sense of personal power, a sense of purpose in life, and a positive view of the future
4. *Values* such as integrity, honesty, and responsibility[3]

From the Family Services Coalition in Kansas City to the Families First Initiative in Forest Lake, Minnesota, family support workers are not only participating in the Healthy Communities–Healthy Youth

Best Practices

Youth Asset Development and Family Support

Positive Youth Asset Development	Family Support
Focuses on building youth assets more than on preventing problems	Focuses on building family strengths as well as on preventing problems
Focuses on all youth, not just those at risk	Focuses on all families, not just those at risk
Takes an ecological approach that views youth, family, and community development as connected	Takes an ecological approach that views child, family, and community development connected
Views caring relationships, both within and without the family, as key	Views caring parental and other family relationships as key
Responds to the developmental needs of youths	Responds to child and family developmental needs together
Views youth as resources, leaders	Views parents as resources, leaders

Survey

Family Support And Youth Asset Building

This survey is your chance to expand FRCA's technical assistance to family support organizations in building youth assets. Please take a few moments to complete the survey and return it to FRCA by September 1, 1998.

Youth assets have been identified as: support from family members and other caring adults, empowerment through playing useful roles, experiencing boundaries and high expectations, using time constructively, having a commitment to learning, holding positive values such as working for equality and social justice, being socially aware, being socially competent, and having a positive identity.

In this survey, "youth" means young people in middle and high school, roughly ages 10 through 18.

1. Organization

Address_____

Your Name & Title_____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-mail_____

2. For each of the following, check the appropriate column to indicate HOW MUCH the statement represents your family support organization.

	VERY MUCH	SOMEWHAT	NOT AT ALL
1. We do a lot of youth asset-building activities.	❑	❑	❑
2. We target mostly "at-risk" youth.	❑	❑	❑
3. Youth are significantly involved as decision makers in our organization.	❑	❑	❑
4. Our mission statement explicitly includes a focus on building youth assets.	❑	❑	❑
5. There are staff explicitly identified as leaders for or experts about youth asset building in our organization.	❑	❑	❑
6. Organizational planning and decision making involves diverse youth (age, gender, ethnicity).	❑	❑	❑
7. We provide many opportunities for youth to serve others.	❑	❑	❑
8. We provide many mentor programs or similar programs to connect youth with caring adults.	❑	❑	❑
9. We focus more on building youths' strengths or assets than on keeping them out of trouble.	❑	❑	❑

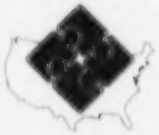
	VERY MUCH	SOMEWHAT	NOT AT ALL
10. We raise awareness of youth asset building among our family support colleagues.	❑	❑	❑
11. Most of our staff have had formal training in building youth assets.	❑	❑	❑
12. Most of our staff understand how similar the basic principles of family support and youth asset building are.	❑	❑	❑

3. Please check the appropriate column to indicate HOW INTERESTED your organization is RIGHT NOW in each item listed.

	VERY INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	NOT AT ALL INTERESTED
13. Reading about how to build youth assets.	❑	❑	❑
14. Being trained in how to build youth assets.	❑	❑	❑
15. Hiring staff who are skilled in youth asset-building.	❑	❑	❑
16. Collaborating with organizations that have a larger focus than we do on youth asset building.	❑	❑	❑

Thank you for completing this survey. Your efforts will help FRCA better serve the family support field in building youth assets.

Please fax the completed survey by September 1, 1998, to Susan Baum, FRCA, 312/338-1522 or mail it to:



Family Resource Coalition of America
Attn: Susan Baum
20 N. Wacker Drive
Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60606

This survey was developed in collaboration with Search Institute, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

movement; they are beginning to claim leadership roles in it. This spring, we tested a new workshop in Colorado to help family support workers in Denver and Colorado Springs better integrate asset-building principles into their parent education efforts. With the advent of such resources as FRCA's new family support training materials and workshops, training and support to enable family support organizations to be leaders in their communities' efforts to build youth assets have never been more available. Let's seize the moment.

Peter Scales, Ph.D. is Senior Fellow with Search Institute, 700 South 3rd St., Ste. 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415, 314/225-2112 (phone and fax).

Notes

Benson, P. (1997) All kids are our kids. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

Scales, P. (1997) "The role of family support programs in building developmental assets among young adolescents: A national survey of services and staff training needs." Child Welfare 76(5): 611-638.

Scales, P., P. Benson, D. Blyth, and N. Leffert (1996) "The strength of developmental assets as predictors of positive youth development outcomes." Applied Developmental Science (in press).

What Do Young Adolescents Need?

A Guide for Programs and Families

1. Physical Activity

Young adolescents' spurts of boundless energy are as well known as their periods of dreamy lethargy. They need time to stretch and exercise rapidly growing bodies; they also need time to relax. Parents of young adolescents need to remember the diversity in strength, dexterity, and size of youth in this age group. Intensely competitive physical activity often places an unnecessary burden on late bloomers who cannot compete successfully. Early bloomers who are pressured to conform to sexual stereotypes that reward athletic prowess rather than intellectual or social development also can be harmed by stressful sports competition.

2. Competence and Achievement

Because young adolescents experience extraordinary self-consciousness about their own new selves and the attitudes of others toward them, it is easy to understand their overwhelming desire to do something well and to receive admiration for achievement. Young people hunger for chances to prove themselves. Opportunities should reward them if all goes well and should not be devastating if all does not go well. Young adolescents need to know that what they do is valued by their parents and others whom they respect.

3. Self-Definition

Rapidly changing bodies and minds require time to absorb new ways of thinking, new mirrored reflections, and new reactions from others. To accommodate the new selves that they are becoming, young adolescents need chances to consider what it means to be a man or a woman and to belong to a race or an ethnic group. They need privacy. They need time to find a friend and share a secret, or to have a good talk with their parents or others adults. They need opportunities to explore their widening world and to reflect upon the meaning of new experiences, so they can begin to consider themselves not just observers, but participants in society.

4. Creative Expression

Opportunities to express their new feelings, interests, abilities, and thoughts help young adolescents to understand and accept the new people they are becoming. Performing and being exposed to drama, literature, and musical works of others help them to see that people before them have felt the emotions and have thought the ideas that are new and confusing to them. In addition to the arts, young adolescents can find opportunities for creative expression in some sports and activities like tending a garden or painting a mural.

5. Positive Social Interactions with Peers and Adults

Young adolescents' parents and other family members remain of primary importance in setting values and giving affection. Their peers offer needed support, companionship, and criticism. In addition, adults other than parents have an effect on the lives of young adolescents, who are eager to understand the possibilities of adulthood. Young adolescents need relationships with adults who are willing to share their own experiences, views, values, and feelings with young people. These adults also can encourage young adolescents to develop positive relationships with peers.

6. Structure and Clear Limits

Young adolescents live in a society of rules, and they want to know and understand their own limits within the system. Clear expectations are crucial for young people, who may be unsure and self-critical. Their search for security in a world of conflicting demands is helped by defining explicit boundaries in areas in which they may seek freedom to explore legitimately. Young adolescents differ from younger children, though, in that they are increasingly capable of participating with adults in framing their own rules and limits.

7. Meaningful Participation

Youths need to participate in the activities that shape their lives. Successful events are planned with, not for, young adolescents. As they develop a mature appearance and more sophisticated social and intellectual skills, they want opportunities to use their new talents. And by learning that their actions can affect the world around them, they gain a sense of responsibility. Parents can help young adolescents see themselves as citizens by providing them opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their communities. Parents need to modify these opportunities to the short attention spans that are characteristic of early adolescence and to select varied tasks that enlist diverse interests and abilities.

Adapted with permission from: G. Dorman (1995) 3:00 to 6:00 pm.: Planning for young adolescents. *Minneapolis, Minn.: Search Institute.*

Evaluating a Youth Program

by Edward C. Siegel and Cheryl A. Videen

The Young Parents Program (YPP) in Duluth, Minnesota, offers parent education classes, support groups, and mentoring to help people aged 18 to 25 become better parents. YPP is increasing young parents' knowledge of disciplining practices and development of children from birth to age three. The stress levels of program participants is decreasing, and they are getting closer to their children. YPP participants are feeling better about themselves and about the support they are receiving from others.

How does YPP know this about its participants?

We make these statements on the basis of good evaluation data. YPP has collected this information because we realize that being able to back up such statements will help us provide program participants with quality services. As evaluators we have worked with close to 200 programs in Minnesota and Ohio. These programs are child-abuse prevention programs and violence-prevention and intervention programs for high-risk youth. Although a number of them have included mentoring activities, until now we have seen very little "good" outcome data from the programs we are evaluating or in the literature. YPP is producing excellent results, and has the data to prove it.

The program is sponsored by Lutheran Social Services and is funded by the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Minnesota, which is a part of the Department of Children, Families and Learning (DCFL). CTF and other programs funded through DCFL receive evaluation support services from the Center for Evaluation Research (CER). YPP worked with the CER to develop a plan to collect evaluation data using several well-known instruments to provide information to their funders and to help us develop the program. We collect data early in the program and then again much later in the program to allow us to measure the change in program participants over time.

Measuring Outcomes

As a child abuse and neglect prevention program, YPP's primary goal is to reduce the incidence of child abuse. While it is difficult, if not impossible, to measure our success in this directly, some excellent indirect measures do exist. One such measure is the Parenting Stress Inventory (PSI). The PSI measures stress related to parenting, which has been shown to be related to the likelihood that a parent will harm their child. Using a simple statistical test, we did not find that total scores on the PSI had changed significantly.[1] However, the PSI also has several sub-scales, and strong positive changes on one of these indicates that parents' level of closeness to their child(ren) had changed in a positive way. The sub-scales allows program staff to pinpoint the reasons for parental stress and help participants accordingly.

Another goal of YPP is to reduce the feeling of isolation that young single parents often feel. One way to measure isolation is to look at support that parents receive. An excellent measure of support is the Young Adult Social Support Inventory (YASSI). The YASSI measures overall support, and like the PSI, it has several sub-scales. Participants in YPP, while not showing significant overall changes, once again changed on two of the sub-scales. One of the sub-scales measured how participants felt about themselves, and the other measured how they felt about the support they were getting. This told us that the program is making good progress in these areas but that more work needs to be done to provide parents with support.

A third goal of the program is to teach good parenting. The program collected data using two excellent measures of parenting knowledge:

1. The Knowledge of Discipline Alternatives
2. The Knowledge of Child Development Inventory

Results from both tests showed that participants are learning significant amounts of information about how to be better parents, but it remained an open question whether they were putting this information into practice. To explore this question, YPP used an observational checklist called the Parent Behavior Scale (PBS) to measure parent-child communications, discipline practices, and the physical care provided by parents. Unfortunately, the observational data produced were not strong enough to support the assertion that parents are putting their learning into practice. We are confident, however, that with time and more data we will be able to assert that they are successfully doing so.[2]

YPP also collected data on the progress participants made toward achieving personal goals, using an adaptation of a goal-setting technique developed by Tom Kiresuk called Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS). The modified procedure replaces GAS' fairly complicated scoring with a simple count of the number of steps people have taken toward completing their goals. The results showed that 28 YPP participants set 123 goals and made progress on 102 of them. For example, one participant attended a mediation session to work out a visitation schedule with the child's other parent. In another family, both parents quit smoking and do not allow their friends to smoke in their apartment.

In many cases, participants made substantial progress without reaching their final goals. For example, one young mother found a part-time job when her goal was to find a full-time one. Another young mother child-proofed her living room and nursery. These partially reached goals represent significant accomplishments that people can celebrate. These achievements can also be used as a platform to build upon.

It is still too early in the development of this program to know everything about what it can accomplish. But it is clear that the program is making a difference in the lives of the families it serves—we have the data to prove it!

Edward C. Siegel is President of the Center for Evaluation Research, and Cheryl A. Videen is its Director of Operations. They may be contacted at 219 SE Main St., Suite 303, Minneapolis, MN 55414, 800/353-3390 (phone), 612/623-3499 (fax), ecs@mn.com (e-mail), or http://www.mn.com/cer (web site).

Notes

All of the statistical tests referred to in this paper were two-tailed, paired sample t-tests, and all results were tested with alpha = .05. Statistical criteria were not met in this instance because many total scores could not be calculated due to missing data, which reduced the sample size. However, we feel that as more data are collected we will see improvement in this area.

The PBS requires a long period of observation, even then there may not be an opportunity for the target behaviors to be exhibited. Many items were left blank in the YPP data, and incomplete data make it difficult to obtain reliable statistical results.

This article was prepared under a subcontract between the Center for Evaluation Research and Professional Data Analysts, prime contractors with the Children's Trust Fund of Minnesota. Thanks to Kathleen Chapman and all of those working with her at CTF for their excellent work.

Mentors Help Inner City Youths Stay Positive

by Sam Beck

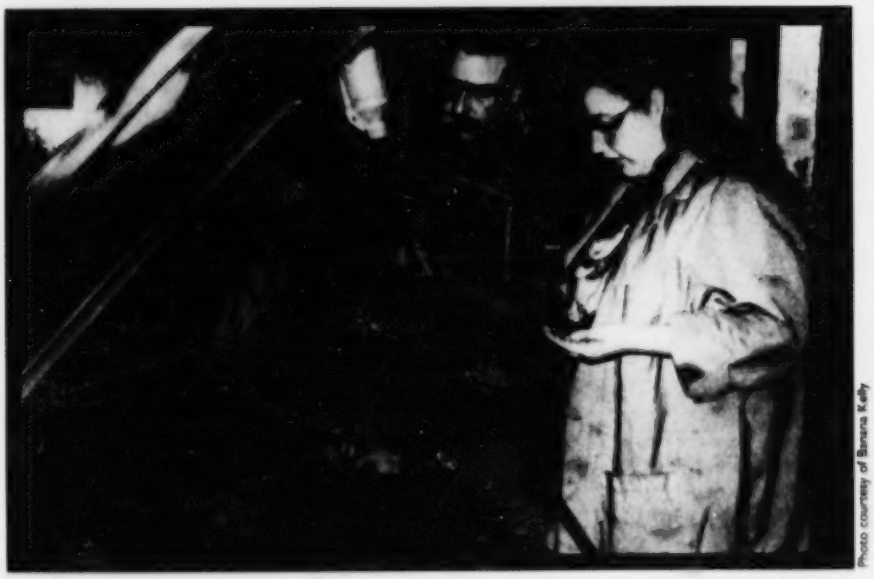


Photo courtesy of Banana Kelly

"Many inner city families feel that they are trapped in their present situations and that there is little they can do . . . This is why many youth do not look into the future," said a Cornell University student—a Latina from the inner city—who is part of the Urban Semester Program of the university's College of Human Ecology. "This pessimistic view is established by their parents," she explained. "If it is not broken, this pattern of no ambition continues from generation to generation."

But many young people, such as those involved in the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association in the South Bronx, resist this pessimism. Rather than focusing on the barriers and deficits in their lives, they look to the future and to positive changes. They build community from the ground up—friend by friend and street by street.

The Urban Semester Program of Cornell University's College of Human Ecology brings together Cornell undergraduates with young mentors, called program associates, involved in the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association in the South Bronx in relationships of mutual learning and teaching. For almost five years, the two groups have collaborated in each other's programs and projects, and this continuing interaction has produced trusting relationships that bridge differences of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and class.

The Cornell students spend an academic semester in New York City participating in internships, school-based community service learning projects, site visits, and discussions. Banana Kelly children and youth develop relationships with the university students in formal school and informal after-school programs, and learn about college life and what it takes to become a college student. The students learn from the Banana Kelly participants about their strengths, capacities, and overall sense of community.

Interviews With Mentors

***Steve DeJesus**, 24, is a program associate at BK who has worked there since February 1997. He participated in the Banana Kelly (BK) innovative New Directions for Youth (NDFY) and Community Learning Institute (CLI) programs. NDFY offers neighborhood youth an opportunity to earn a GED and provides hands-on training in the electrical, plumbing, carpentry, and building maintenance trades. The students learn to work in teams and on their own. CLI created an opportunity for youth to live in a dormitory and participate in NDFY and other mentorship opportunities. Steve participated with a group of visiting Latino youth from Los Angeles and former NDFY participants who lived together for three months. They participated on a regular basis in discussions and seminars with guest participants, mentors, and facilitators.*

SB: What do you do?

SD: My work involves basic community work, international training, and . . . engaging youth in their communities to work with the organization, Banana Kelly. I try to change their whole way of looking at the world … from doing bad stuff to doing good stuff. I work on different projects. Just now, I completed a case study for Rainbow Research on the cultural aspects on youth working for BK. I organized the visit and set up interviews, discussion and focus groups, and tours for the Rainbow Research people.

SB: What should professionals and policy makers know about the youth in the South Bronx?

SD: What we need is for people to listen to us, to give us a chance to express our feelings and thoughts. They should know that we have voices, too. People should know that we make an impact on a lot of decision making in the BK community and that we work hard to make our community better. We have a youth who works in the Banana Kelly High School [a brand new school organized as a grassroots effort by the Banana Kelly community]. Jacob Scott is a community person. He is a community counselor and works on different projects in the school and gives them advisory time. Sometimes kids are afraid to speak to an adult about certain problems. Jacob is easier to approach. He is only a couple years older and he knows where they are coming from; what issues they deal with. They may need advice—school work, personal stuff, and community problems. They need advice about a brother or sister who isn't doing right. A parent lost a job and the house is full of tension. A conversation with Jacob makes life easier for them. He gives them a chance to pay attention to their school work.

Also, take me and Jason. We talk to other youth in the community—reach out and make them understand to stay in school. They need to be educated about a lot of things. You always need to be learning, and without education you won't know what is going on. We [Jason and Steve] are a web of drop-outs who didn't think we needed

education and now we are back realizing that we need it. We try to get people to think about not falling into the same web that we fell into.

SB: What should professional community workers know about you and youth like you?

SD: I don't know. What do you mean?

SB: What should professionals have known about you when you were, say, 16, 17, 18 years old?

SD: They should have known that they could come up to me on the street and ask me why I was doing this, and they could have come up to me to have a conversation. I would have been open to it.

SB: Why do you think they didn't they do it?

SD: When you come from the inner city, you know, what they call the ghetto, we are seen as bad people. . . . That's wrong! We may be doing bad things, but we still have a heart! I've been to many different trainings, but I never had a conversation where someone really cared about me. It was just in and out for the application. That's it. They didn't want to know me or know about me. I was kind of like a number. We may be on the street, but not all of us have the bad heart. Some of us are just doing street stuff to survive on a daily basis.

SB: What would it take to get youth off the street?

SD: It would take education—someone, instead of coming down trying to say that you are the problem of society, to talk to us about the way things really are. Educate them as to how they are going to end up. Get them used to reality.

SB: Would they understand? Would they know?

SD: They know! Sometimes they are just waiting for someone. They wait for something to happen or change. It takes just one person, one thing to open up the window a little before they look through it. A lot of people don't have the window open. They have it shut.

SB: Tell me if I am understanding what you are saying. We can't give up on youth. There is always the opportunity to get the window open.

SD: That's right. There is something that will attract them at the right moment.

SB: So, you're saying that as professionals we should just talk to you.

SD: It's a start. You just have to be yourself. You'll attract them faster.

***Jason Cintron,** 23, started BK in 1994 as a student and has been a program associate since 1995. He is a young leader who for two years was instrumental in recruiting members of his extended family, neighbors, and friends to the New Directions for Youth program. He also helped create and develop the Community Learning Institute, which forged a partnership between Los Angeles youth and Banana Kelly youth in the South Bronx and serves as a model for mutual learning across borders. Jason recently returned from some time away from Banana Kelly to lend his powerful way of communicating across ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic lines to bringing about prosperity for his community and the people for whom he cares.*

SB: How did you get involved in BK?

JC: I used to live on Beck street and that's how I came to BK. I was out with my stepfather remodeling a beauty salon on Longwood [Avenue]. My girl at the time told me about a program across the street. It had GED and job training. So I went and I met with the assistant director of NDFY. She gave me information about NDFY. She told me to go to Southern Boulevard to get tested. I went there and took the test—an aptitude test. I wanted to go to BK, and I told them that. They sent my results there, and BK accepted me.

SB: Why did you decide to go to BK?

JC: The thing that attracted me was building maintenance training. It is a job I already was doing. I had not graduated high school and they were giving GED also. That made me decide to get myself into something that would occupy my mind. Neighborhood youth had their destinies chosen for them by being part of that underground community. The two destinations that the youth were moving to were either incarceration or death. I said to myself, "I have this little baby brother—do I want him to grow up to do the things that I was doing?" No!

I decided to go to school and change my own destiny. At the same time I also noticed that we lack role models in our communities. So, not only did I choose how I wanted my destiny to be, but to become a positive role model for youth in and around my neighborhood. I graduated at the top of the class with highest honors in BK's NDFY program in building maintenance, sheetrocking, electricity, and all that.

SB: What are you doing now?

JC: Right now I am looked at [in my neighborhood] as a local politician. The youth have respect for me because of my past and now my present and what I am doing for myself and my community.

SB: How would you like outsiders who come into your community to behave?

JC: First things first. They should come in with an open mind and a sense of respect. They should not be judging people for what they did not accomplish, and . . . come with open ears and allow people to speak their minds without the judging that usually happens. And also . . . give us a chance. We may not know how to speak proper English. We may not be educated as well as they. But, we do have voices and ideas. If we work together, we should do it not because you have a degree and you know what you know. We should work together to accomplish a common goal. We want people to come with that in mind.

SB: What needs to be accomplished in the community?

JC: We adults need to work with our younger generations, allow them to speak their minds even when we don't understand them. We have to force ourselves to understand. We need them to know that we are working with them, alongside them.

SB: How do you do that?

JC: I'll give you an example. It's about CLI. I was among the first to establish that relationship. Banana Kelly had partners in Los Angeles, We Care for Youth, Linda Maxwell, and Yoland Trevino in the Vaughn Family Center. I was among a group of people who visited them. We wanted to create a relationship with LA youth, to let it blossom where they could learn from it, learn things that they lack in their communities, like construction, rehabilitation of houses [skills that they didn't have]. LA had a lot of destroyed housing with no funds to rehab and no skills to remodel.

BK, having those trades, could teach them something new and benefit them and their community in the long run. We didn't go to LA to start CLI. It was created as we developed our relationship, right there at that time. They wanted to keep me out there. Yolanda [Rivera, BK's CEO] and Joe Hall [CEO of Banana Kelly International] took me … and Charles, another BK youth, and talked to us about staying. They said, "the LA people were amazed with the work you do, your contact with the gang members, your ability to communicate and work with them." They didn't want me to leave. I

turned it down. I didn't feel it was right that I stay there and help them when I need to be giving my community what it needs.

That's where the idea came to have the gang members come to NYC to learn building maintenance, get an education, and live in a dorm with some of the BK youth. Steve De Jesus was one of them. I was involved with the project. I arranged for the furnishings. I helped the residents of the dorm with everything they needed, got them their stipends for food shopping and kept an eye out for them. I was their "yes" [assistant and coordinator] for them in NYC.

SB: What did you like the most about this exchange?

JC: NY and LA came together as one. It wasn't about the negative violence, East Coast/West Coast nonsense. We became a team, us and LA. They came here with their guard up, and seeing it deteriorate to the point where they were brothers was great. I was the tightest with them. Just seeing them take up the opportunity [was great]!

SB: What did they take away?

JC: They got what they came here for—skills for their neighborhood.

SB: What do you do now?

JC: I am youth coordinator/community trainer. I am associated with different projects. I am creating the BK website, for example. I am involved in creating new strategies and activities for the new CLI.

SB: What would you want people to know about youths?

JC: What does it take to work with us? It takes respect for the ways they [young people] have been able to survive. It takes understanding. It takes love. It's also a process you can't rush. You have to sit down with the individuals and you talk and talk over time.

You start with a story about difficulty, confusion, and choices that they had to make. Youth can see that they [outsiders] went through the same type of thoughts and fears. That establishes confidence in having a conversation [in the first place].

(continued on next page)

Bresee Youth

Channeling Youths' Energy Into Positive Activities

Photos © 1997 Stephen Shames / Matrix

In the photograph to the right, Roy Panton, a participant in Bresee Youth, paints over graffiti. Soon after this picture was taken, he stopped painting so as not to disturb—or splatter paint on—the sleeping homeless man.

At left, Ken Provost, a mentor and leader in Bresee Youth, sprays water during a water fight that erupted as the youth workers and program participants were cleaning up after the graffiti removal.

It…begins to set up the foundation for systematic change. You have to have trust first. Regardless of how young we may be, what differences we may have grown up with, regardless of any negative things we did or have been caught up in, we still have the ability to change. It may not be right away. But it will be!

Thaina Vasquez, *20, is a program associate who has worked at BK on and off since she was 15 years old. Like many others in Banana Kelly's workforce, she has family members who work at BK. These overlapping relationships of kin, neighbors, coworkers, and friends create a community in which people look out for each other and those for whom they care. This structure sustains the community-building efforts, entrepreneurial activities, and formation of consciously political identities that have been bringing about change in this part of the South Bronx. People really care about where they live, who they live with and next to, and the resources that are available to them and their children. They care about who comes into their community to share in their community-building efforts. Thaina is one of many young people creating the next generation of community builders. She is presently studying accounting at the NYC Technical College in Brooklyn.*

SB: How did you get started working with BK?

TV: I started in the summertime. There were signs up in my building for summer leadership training. I walked in with the flier in my hand, signed up, got interviewed, and they accepted me. I got interviewed by three different people!

SB: Were you scared?

TV: I was very scared. It was my first real job. I always considered myself, at that age, as a street person. I would come home at any time. I didn't think I was good enough to work in the company.

SB: Why not?

TV: I was never good with talking with people. I had an attitude. The crowd that I hung out with [influenced me].

SB: Why did you want to make a change?

TV: I was bored and tired of hanging out on the street having nothing to do.

SB: Did your friends hassle you about this?

TV: Some did. At first I ignored it. They would say, "Oh you think you're better than us!" Then I told them, "I have the same fear you do. I am going to get over that fear and then I can come back and show you how to get over it."

SB: So, what happened?

TV: I finished the summer and went back to school. I grew some in that program. I still had an attitude, though. I didn't want to do anything. I could just stay home and do nothing. Eventually I left school. I failed just about every class. Then I came back to BK for another summer job.

SB: Why did you do that?

TV: When I was at BK I had a sense of worth. When I went back to school I lost those feelings. I thought that if I go back, I can get those feelings back and keep them rather than letting go of them. And it happened! They are great feelings. They allowed me to be part of helping in the community. They didn't use my past against me. They didn't even mention it. They wanted me to focus on the good things that I have done and that I didn't realize. And they had me focus on all the good things that I achieved and I did have those, too!

SB: What would you tell professionals who come into your community to work?

TV: They should be themselves. They don't have to have any fear. We may dress differently and talk differently [but] we are the same human beings as they are. They shouldn't come in with the attitude that they are better than us. We are equal even if we are just hanging out and not in school right now. Sometimes they have to go the extra mile to get the greatness out of us. We sometimes are embarrassed about our greatness. Sometimes it just takes for us to dig deeper. They should ask us what we can do for our communities, not what they can do.

SB: What are you working on now?

TV: I am working on several projects that are important to me. I am doing a fundraiser to get students to the Peace Conference being organized in Los Angeles. I am also working with Joe Hall to write a proposal to make an after-school center for schools around here. The schools have them, but they are only for the kids from that school. What happens to brothers and sisters? They can't go to after-school programs together, or with friends from the neighborhood who go to different schools? This is a project that was not finished from my summertime work. I had written donation letters for after-school programs. I interviewed parents and kids. But when I left to go back to school, no one took my place. Nothing happened. That made me feel bad.

SB: What's the last thing you would want to tell people who are going to read your words?

TV: Not to give up on today's youth. Give those youth who are not making an impact on their community … time to come out. Everyone does things at their own pace. Do not give up on today's youth. Let's start working on prevention with young kids, eight and nine, and not wait until they are 17 and in trouble and then look to change their lives.

I want to send a message to my peers and friends. Let no one or anything stand in your way. I know some of you youth out there do not have that support and you don't have anyone pushing you right now. Let me tell you, there is nothing like being able to say, "I did it on my own! I made it!" So, instead of feeling like everyone is giving up on you, do it yourself and to heck with them!

Banana Kelly has leveraged more than $200 million of investments in the South Bronx; built nearly 3,000 units of safe, affordable housing; and provided education and employment training to more than 900 out-of-school youth. Banana Kelly's efforts extend nationwide and internationally.

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Curricula for Parents of Youths

How to Find the Right Fit

by Susan Baum and Nilofer Ahsan

Parenting Education for Parents of Youths

When we think of parenting education, we often think about first-time parents struggling with the issues of early childhood development. Yet, as the parent of any teenager can tell you, parenting teens can be every bit as challenging as parenting young children—though obviously in different ways. Parents are reminded daily that approaches that worked when their children were younger do not produce the same results now that these children have reached their teens. Feeling ill-prepared for the challenges presented by the events in their teens' lives and by their new ideas and behaviors, parents often react before they've had time to think about what they really want to convey to their teen. Ironically, the very qualities that parents seek to develop in their children as they mature into young adults—independence and self-sufficiency—often frustrate and frighten them as their children begin to assert themselves and take on new roles.

Family support programs can play an essential role in supporting parents as their children grow through the school years and adolescence. However, most parents of adolescents don't seek support and assistance from the programs or schools their children attend unless they have a specific concern or problem. They feel that they should know how to handle their children by now, and they may not want to admit that they're finding parenting their teen difficult, or that there are issues they don't know how to deal with. Also, they often don't know that supports are available to them. By providing services and supports especially for the parents of teens, family support programs can send the important message that parenting teens requires acquiring new knowledge, new skills, and new strategies. Moreover, family support programs can play a key role in providing the resources and information needed to support this learning process.

Recognizing that there are hundreds of books and resources for parenting adolescents, FRCA interviewed a number of parent educators about what to look for in a parent education curriculum for parents of teens. We asked them a series of questions about what makes for a strong parent education curriculum for parents of teens. The following are some of their recommendations.

How should a parent education curriculum for parents of teens be structured?

Ray Burke, Common Sense Parenting: There are five characteristics to look for:

1. The curriculum should be well researched. It's important to know that the skills being taught are making a difference in parents' lives. Theory won't help—skills will.
2. The curriculum has to be replicable, reliably reproduced over time.
3. It has to be practical. Parents need to be able to learn and demonstrate skills in a neutral setting. Role playing is a great tool to use in helping parents practice what they learn.
4. The curriculum has to be adaptable; basic skills taught in a parent education class should be useful to all, regardless of demographics. These skills should be adapted to meet the individual needs of the family.
5. It has to be a humane interaction for parents and children.

James J. Conway, Conway Training Associates: A good curriculum is structured with a high degree of clarity; it should be as user-friendly as possible, lay out very clearly what the goals and objectives are, and include annotated bibliographic material and a resource list.

Susan Reed, Active Parenting: A good curriculum needs to be theory- and research-based. The materials are designed to be user-friendly. The content proceeds logically and is developed to meet the needs of the adult learner, therefore providing a safe place for new skills to be introduced and practiced before application at home. This would include various forms of presenting the information—print, video, and modeling positive and negative situations. The materials should find a balance that offers parents both opportunities to affirm what they do effectively and options for change. The curriculum should also include teen developmental information.

How do you interact with parents?

James J. Conway, Conway Training Associates: With great respect and a sense of humor. We want to provide a context where there can be a lot of talking and sharing. We want parents to leave a workshop feeling a little lighter.

Susan Reed, Active Parenting: In addition to being a good listener, I find that it is important to be nonjudgmental, encouraging, and enthusiastic. I have yet to work with a parent who doesn't want the best for their children, but sometimes living life gets in the way of their ability to be effective.

Anne Robertson, National Parent Information Network: The parent educator is both a teacher and a facilitator. Over the phone and electronically, the parent educator responds to parents' questions and helps them get more information. Good curricula should empower parents to seek out community resources. The parent educator is a bridge between parents and available resources.

What should a good parent education curriculum cover?

Vivian Murphy, ParentLink: Communication between parents and teens is key. The curriculum should cover how to talk with your teen about high-risk behavior such as sex, substance abuse, and so on. But it is equally important for the curriculum to normalize the teen years as much as possible. Not all teens are involved in high-risk behavior. Spending time with teens and listening to their concerns are important things to teach parents as well.

Susan Reed, Active Parenting: The content should start with parents' self-esteem and enable them to go home and build their teens' self-esteem. Communication and options for discipline should also be addressed. It is okay for parents to admit it when they have made a mistake, but they have to turn things around. Parents are the most important people in their teens' lives, and this relationship should be built on the premise of mutual respect.

Ray Burke, Common Sense Parenting: Parents need to learn how to negotiate with their teens and how to come to clear, agreed-upon understandings with them about what is negotiable. Also, they need to learn how to teach adolescents to recognize what they can and cannot change. A good parent education curriculum should help parents learn to recognize and

acknowledge when their teens are doing well. Another good area to cover is how to stay calm: this would include recognizing what your teen does that sets you off, what the warning signs are, and identifying what you can do differently. If parents can stay calm, teens will mirror this behavior.

What should be avoided? What are indicators of a bad curriculum?

Vivian Murphy, ParentLink: Avoid curricula that are not research-based or that sanction abuse. Curricula that do not take into account diversity issues such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic level, or learning and parenting styles, should also be avoided. Material that is not appropriate to the audience is another thing to avoid. A curriculum that does not include parent involvement or is not congruent with human development is a bad one.

Anne Robertson, National Parent Information Network: Avoid inflexible, packaged curricula that do not respond to parents' needs or recognize cultural differences.

Susan Reed, Active Parenting: Avoid any curriculum that is inflexible or fosters power struggles between learners and the presenter. Bad curricula do not help parents assess their strengths and weaknesses as parents and do not affirm diversity through their content—for example, the videos presented—and through the availability of reading materials for all reading levels. Avoid programs that focus only on the negative—only on changes that need to occur—without balancing this with opportunities for parents to share what works for them and to contribute to and learn from each other.

Ray Burke, Common Sense Parenting: The tendency is to lead a discussion group with parents. Don't make everything all talk. Role play! A lot of parent training programs try to do too much in too little time—avoid this pitfall! A bad curriculum is one that is not research-based.

Youths Say . . .
We Can Speak for Ourselves

by Dabriah Alston, age 18

It was October first. What would be a temperate day in New York was a hot day in New Orleans. I awoke knowing today would be one of the most exciting days in my life. I was going to be giving a speech on youth involved in public policy. It was at the Omni Royal Hotel, at the Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families conference. I was here to speak as a representative of Good Shepherd Services. I was the only 16-year-old among many adults from large corporations.

At nine o'clock, three other people and I took a seat at the table up front. People started to arrive and take their seats. This was it; it was time to begin.

The woman who was running the workshop informed me that I would be the first to speak, and then went into the introduction. As she spoke, a fear built up inside of me. A burning sensation started at my feet and soon made it up to my brow, causing me to break out in a sweat. My mouth began to get dry.

But I jumped into it. I talked about the intense training period me and my coworkers had to endure to be part of projects such as Youth Recognition Day and the Five Year Plan.

I was a little upset at my performance, but hey, I'm only human. After about 45 minutes more we were allowed to take a break, before it was time to begin another session, where we would do the same thing again in front of a different group of people.

On the pad that was set in front of me I wrote out a little outline and jotted some key things down. After that it was off to my break. In my exploration I ended up in a wonderful little garden, where another conference attendee stopped me to read my name tag and to inquire about the program I'm involved in. I told him where I was from and gave him information about my program. It was nice to speak and have people actually listen.

After speaking to a lot of different people and having pictures taken, it was time for our next session. While sitting at the table this time, I felt more confident about everything. And when it was my turn to speak, I blew it out the box. During the question/answer period it felt good to know that people were interested in what little old me had to say. Afterward, different people approached me and thanked me for being there. A man from a foundation even offered me a job when I get out of college. And that topped things off pretty good.

This was an experience that really helped me, because now I know for a fact that someone is always out there listening to things I say. It made me a very proud person. This is something that I will take with me through life. Many people my age don't get a chance to be heard, but I was, and now I'm addicted and am never going to stop.

GOOD SHEPHERD SERVICES at the Red Hook Community Center in New York City include:

- After-school enrichment
- Weekly family nights, special events, and intergenerational activities
- Career development for youths and adults
- Leadership development and community service activities
- Summer play groups
- Teen activities
- Sports leagues for youths and adults
- Community newspaper
- Family counseling
- Medical services

Contact: Red Hook Community Center 71 Sullivan St., Brooklyn, NY 11231, 718/522-6910 (phone), 718/522-4435 (fax).

Bridging the Generation Gap
Approaches to Multi-Generational Programs

by Raul Ratcliffe and Elizabeth Steinfield

Imagine a neighborhood that has a wonderful senior center, great adult programs, and an outstanding youth program. In this neighborhood there is a settlement house where adults and senior citizens find they have no meaningful contact with young people. This is because while the individual programs are outstanding, there are no bridges between the community's programs that bring together the different generations. Recognizing the potential community-building benefits of interacting with younger generations and sharing different experiences and perspectives, the settlement house decides to attempt to bridge the gap. Where do they begin?

Typically, the notion of multi-generational programming conjures up images of bringing together young people and senior citizens. The Center for Youth Development and Policy Research (the Center) seeks to broaden the understanding of "multi-generational" to include the generations between the youngest and oldest in our society—the adults, if you will, who comprise the group that holds the most decision-making power in arenas that directly impact youth and seniors. The community dilemma illustrated above provokes questions about how programs can be structured and governed to meet the needs of multiple generations simultaneously and at the same time foster new, mutually beneficial relationships across those generations. To begin to answer these questions, communities interested in developing multi-generational programming should consider two main issues:

1. The benefits of involving youth, adults, and seniors in multi-generational programs
2. How governance of the lead organization will be structured and the degree to which youth, adults, and seniors will be involved.

Multi-generational Involvement: Contributions and Benefits

Youth, adults, and seniors each bring important perspectives, experience, and knowledge to contribute and each reap benefits of participation. As noted above, adults tend to have the majority of decision-making power, while young people and senior citizens are assigned to the margins. Howard Knoll, executive director of the Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Houses in New York City, held a workshop in which youth and seniors were asked to identify what they had in common. Members of both groups reported that:

- They are not taken seriously; the perception of young people is that they don't know enough and the perception of seniors is that they don't know what they are talking about.
- They have difficulty finding employment; youth are regarded as too young and inexperienced, and seniors are seen as too old.
- They are short of money because of their difficulty in finding work.
- They are disconnected from their families; many youth are thought of as rebellious and many seniors are thought of as burdens.

Multi-generational programs, particularly those that are designed and governed with the participation of participants, are opportunities to dispel the pervading myths that youth and seniors are unproductive and noncontributing members of society.

Multi-generational programs are opportunities to dispel the myths that youth and seniors are unproductive and noncontributing members of society.

The attributes that youth, adults, and seniors bring, different as they may be, must be fostered in mutually empowering and respectful relationships with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Adults should not abdicate their roles, power, and accountability to young people, nor should young people be forced to accept a role that is not developmentally appropriate. Seniors, who are often completely left out of consideration when it comes to community program planning, should be included and respected for their unique contributions.

Youth

Communities have a responsibility to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for young people to develop skills and competencies through a variety of experiences. Through these experiences young people develop their own sense of responsibility, accountability, and understanding of the importance of multi-generational relationships. In many cases, the first-hand experiences and insights into the community that young people bring to multi-generational programs enhance the experiences of all involved. Additional benefits of youth involvement are the time, ideas, enthusiasm, and creativity they bring to community efforts.

Adults

Equally valuable are the knowledge, skill, and experience that caring adults bring to the table. They are often in positions of power and influence and can have great impact on the program planning process. Furthermore, adults who are afforded an opportunity to work closely with young people and seniors gain a fuller understanding of, and appreciation for, how members of the younger and older generations are contributing members of communities who are concerned, willing, and able to work with adults on a mutually agreed upon set of priorities.

Seniors

Like adults and youth, seniors bring their own unique perspectives and experiences to intergenerational programming. They

contribute their time, energy, and commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for community involvement. Through their involvement, older participants benefit in many ways, including: increased satisfaction and sense of purpose in their lives; new, positive, meaningful relationships with children, youth, and adults in the community; understanding and acceptance of today's youth; opportunities to transfer culture, knowledge, skills, and values to the next generation; and continued involvement in their communities.

Governance Structures and Involvement

The nature and degree of participant involvement depends heavily on the governance structure of the organization. As an organization decides to take a multi-generational approach to planning and programming, it must decide what its approach will be in terms of bringing representatives of those generations to the planning table. This requires a learning and growth process for the organization, which includes the strengthening of systems to support and further develop the opportunities for youth, adults, and seniors to come together in a meaningful way.

In many instances, the roles and responsibilities of each generational group—youth, adults, and seniors—are left unclear and poorly defined. However, there are important considerations to explore during the planning phase of multi-generational programming. Four approaches to the governance of participant involvement are outlined below:

- Youth, adults, and seniors are given clearly defined and distinct roles. These roles may not be equal on all counts, but they utilize the expertise and strengths that each generation brings to the process. In this approach, everyone's input is valued and decisions are usually made by group consensus.
- Youth and adults are given equal responsibility and power within the program to shape program direction and activities. Decisions are made through a voting process. Results may not be supported by the whole group, but they reflect the judgment of a majority of group members.
- The program that is administering the project makes all major decisions relating to activities and program direction. The decision-making process often takes into consideration input from participants, but the participants are generally not at the table when the decisions are being made.
- The program that is administering the project makes all major decisions relating to activities and program direction. No input from participants or the larger community is taken into consideration. Decisions are based on project goals that have been developed without the consultation of the project's participants. This is the: "if you build it, they will come" approach.

Whichever approach an organization takes, it is critical that it be clear and consistent in the roles and responsibilities ascribed to representatives of the generational groups.

As bridges across the generations, these programs provide a forum and safe space for youth, adults, and seniors to use their differences as advantages and to recognize their similarities.

Key Questions

While there is no one right way to structure a multi-generational program, there are five key areas that need to be well thought through in the development of multi-generational programs:

Governance: Is the governance structure consistent with the organization's beliefs and support systems?

Involvement: Are there opportunities in the program for the meaningful and developmentally appropriate involvement of youth, adults, and seniors?

Roles: Are there clearly defined roles and responsibilities for youth, adults, and seniors within the program?

Content: Are activities focused on addressing developmental needs and building competencies?

Community: Are there opportunities for participants to gain greater awareness and increase civic involvement in the development of their own communities?

People of all generations should have opportunities to be involved in their communities, participate in the development of programs, and foster mutually respectful relationships with each other. Multi-generational programs fill a large gap in many of our communities. As bridges across the generations, these programs provide a forum and safe space for youth, adults, and seniors to use their differences as advantages and to recognize their similarities. The activities within these programs, when done well, provide their intergenerational participants developmentally appropriate opportunities to contribute, to learn, and to recognize that while the times may have changed, the needs of individual people are similar.

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Chemical Dependency and Substance Abuse

A Holistic Approach to Treating Youths

By Nathaniel W. Hurse and Debra Davis-Moody

Beginning around age 12, adolescents must negotiate a psychosocial developmental process that includes gaining independence, coming to terms with their body image, managing peer relations, and defining their identity. It is normal for adolescents to experience some stress as they negotiate this process, but for a variety of reasons, some youth find it particularly difficult. Unfortunately, adolescents too often choose to use drugs and/or alcohol as a coping strategy.

Other environmental strains influence an adolescent's choice to use drugs and alcohol. The breakdown of the family structure is probably the largest non-genetic contributing factor to adolescent use and abuse of drugs. When youth experience stress over their parents' divorce, when newly divorced parents suddenly lose economic stability, when single parents have little time to supervise their children's activities much less spend quality time helping them through the challenges of growing up, adolescents are more at risk for turning to drugs and alcohol.

Today's youth are using stronger substances earlier and in greater quantities. In the past, the prevalent problem among adolescents was cigarette smoking, a habit they first began experimenting with between the ages of seven and ten. Today, children begin experimenting as early as five, six, and seven years old, and many are habitual users by age eight. This habitual use serves as a gateway to using alcohol and other drugs as children grow. By the time they reach adolescence, youth have access to a wide variety of drugs. The most commonly used drugs among adolescents are alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, heroin, cocaine (crack), methamphetamines (crank), and LSD (acid).

Substance Abuse Among African American Youth

Adolescent drug abuse is of particular concern in African American neighborhoods. For economic reasons, African American communities may be more susceptible to drug related activity. Most of the African American community live in urban areas, earn smaller wages, and are in general poorer than their white counterparts. This economic reality provides an environment in which the sale of drugs is a viable means of earning a living, and drug use all too often becomes a coping strategy for economic hardship. Prevalent drug use in a community eventually leads to a "cultural disalignment" where drug use is accepted as part of the community, and the resulting drug culture affects the development pattern of adolescents.

Economic disparities also result in disparities in the overall effect of adolescent drug use among African Americans. Without economic power, African Americans have fewer resources for legal protection, for treatment services, and for taking care of the environmental realities that influence initial drug use. Furthermore, as early as five and six years of age, African Americans are targeted by the police, court systems, juvenile systems, schools, and the media. As a result, African American adolescents are more likely to be caught using drugs, more likely to be prosecuted, and more likely to end up in jail due to drug charges. Unfortunately, due to missed days at work, a criminal record that hinders employment opportunities, and poor treatment by public officials, each encounter with the legal system contributes to the economic hardships and feelings of disempowerment that influence drug use.

The Need for a Holistic Treatment Approach

It is clear that there are a variety of factors that influence adolescent drug use, including normal developmental stress, events within the family, economic challenges, the overall use of drugs within the community, and experiences with racism and discrimination. It is no surprise, therefore, that traditional approaches to prevention, intervention, and treatment of the adolescent population and their families have not been successful. Adolescents choose to use drugs when it appears that doing so will make their life better, if only for a temporary high that serves as a distraction from the troubles of the day. Traditional approaches typically categorize drug use as a single issue problem, rather than taking into account the interplay of factors that affect the choices that youth make. Prevention, intervention, and treatment approaches will only work when they comprehensively consider the parts of an adolescent's life that are not going well and are thus leading to the drug use.

It is also vital that drug prevention, intervention, and treatment approaches take into consideration the cultural differences of the adolescents and families they serve. It is our opinion that for the target population and their families to be better served, we would advocate the use of a therapeutic process called Belief System Analysis. BSA is a cognitive therapy in the sense that it is very much concerned with the act or process of knowing, including both awareness and judgment. Being holistic, the orientation does not separate from the cognitive, the affective, the behavioral, the optimal, the unconscious, and the cultural. BSA differs in two significant ways from other cognitive therapies: (1) it is based on an Afrocentric model of psychological functioning, and (2) it specifies the conceptual system of the world view or reality that the therapist wishes the client to create. BSA is used to teach the client a method of viewing the world, whereby they can achieve maximal positivity.

In conclusion, we advocate a paradigm shift from the traditional categorical approach to a holistic view of the contributing factors to drug use. The BSA is a holistic model that is especially effective with African American youth due to its Afrocentric approach. Only when the developmental, environmental, and cultural realities of youth are considered can we expect drug prevention and treatment attempts to be effective.

Other Resources

Working with African Americans: The Professional's Handbook
F. L. Brisbane & M. Womble (1988)
Chicago, Illinois: HRDI International Press

Understanding an Afrocentric World View: Introduction to an Optimal Psychology
L. J. Myers (1988) Dubuque, Iowa: Kendal/Hunt Publishing Company

An African-Centered Model of Prevention for African-American Youth at High Risk

CSAP Technical Report 6
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1993)
Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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The Psychosocial Development of Adolescents

	EARLY ADOLESCENCE (ages 12-14)	MIDDLE ADOLESCENCE (ages 15-17)	LATE ADOLESCENCE (ages 18 and up)
INDEPENDENCE	• Less interest in parental activities	• Peak of parental conflicts	• Re-acceptance of parental advice and values
BODY IMAGE	• Preoccupation with self and pubertal changes • Uncertainty about appearance	• General acceptance of body • Concern over making body more attractive	• Acceptance of pubertal changes
PEER RELATIONS	• Intense relationships with same sex friends	• Peak of peer involvement • Conformity with peer values • Increased sexual activity	• Peer group less important • More time spent in intimate relationships
IDENTITY	• Increased cognition • Increased fantasy world • Idealistic vocational goals • Increased need for privacy • Lack of impulse control	• Increased scope of feelings • Increased intellectual powers • Feelings of omnipotence • Risk taking behavior	• Practical, realistic vocational goals • Refinement of values • Ability to compromise and to set limits

Adapted from Neinstein, L.S., Stewart, D.C. (1984). "Psychosocial Development of Adolescents." In *Adolescent Health Care: A Practical Guide*. Baltimore: Urban & Schwarzenberg.

RESOURCE FILE

This resource file is a starting point for finding additional information, publications, and assistance in the area of youth development. It is not a comprehensive list. To be added to future lists, please contact FRCA at 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60606.

Publications

Adolescents at Risk: Prevalence and Prevention

By Joy G. Dryfoos,1990

Discusses adolescent delinquency, substance abuse, pregnancy, and school failure, and how they interrelate. Presents data on adolescents most at risk, examines prevention programs across the U.S., and suggests a set of concepts to guide formulation of comprehensive strategies. Describes the components of successful prevention programs and recommends specific policies to develop cohesion in the prevention of high-risk behavior.

Oxford University Press
2001 Evans Road
Cary, NC 27513
800/451-7556

Brave New Girls—Creative Ideas to Help Girls Be Confident, Healthy, & Happy.

By Jeanette Gadeberg,1997

Helps girls in early adolescence become stronger and more self aware in dealing with new situations they will encounter. Useful in presenting the reality of bias that girls face now and when they grow up. Suitable for parents and girls to read and complete exercises together.

Fairview Press
2450 Riverside Avenue S.
Minneapolis, MN 55454
300/544-8207

Community Service and Social Responsibility in Youth

By James Youniss and Miranda Yates,1997

Examines the use of community service in teaching teenagers about the world and themselves. Students are taught social responsibility through a class where the teacher uses film, debate, and on-site activities.

The University of Chicago Press
5801 S. Ellis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637
800/621-2736

Compendium of Information Sources on Youth

By the National Collaboration for Youth,1997

Consists of detailed descriptions, lists of publications and electronic resources, and contact information for over 80 youth information sources.

The National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations
1319 F Street NW
Suite 601
Washington, D.C. 20004

Connections

A monthly publication of the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board.

Provides those working in youth services with a variety of articles on successful programs, profiles of people working in the field and community news.

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board
202 City Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Great Transitions

By the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development,1995

The concluding report of the Carnegie Council's study of the nature and scope of adolescent problems, this examines what is required for, and what is currently threatening, healthy adolescent development. Recommends ways to adapt health care institutions, public schools, communities, the media, universities, government, and businesses to foster healthy adolescent development.

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995
P.O. Box 753
Waldorf, MD 20604
202/429-7979

An abridged version can be obtained by calling 301/645-2742.

Identity and Inner-City Youth: Beyond Ethnicity and Gender

Editors Shirley Brice Heath and Milbrey W. McLaughlin,1993

Answers the question: What do effective youth organizations offer inner-city youngsters that schools do not? Suggests that educators can learn from inner-city social and youth organizations, which reach at-risk youngsters by developing a sense of family that many of them fail to get at home. Addresses topics such as: collaboration across organizations, the role of gangs in social control, and the historical roles of ethnicity and gender in youth organizations.

Teachers College Press
Columbia University
1234 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10027
212/678-3929

Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings

By the Panel on High-Risk Youth,1993

Argues that the problems of troubled youth cannot be separated from the settings in which they live and that our youth programs are failing as a result. A panel examines what works and what doesn't in the effort to support and nurture adolescents and offers models for successful programs.

National Academy Press
2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Box 285
Washington, D.C. 20055
800/624-6242

A Portrait of Young Adolescence in the 1990's

By Peter Scales,1995

This acclaimed report details current research on 10 to 15-year-olds, exploring the impact of social and political trends of the 1990s. Provides a framework for creating policies and programs that respond to young adolescents' physical, emotional, and cognitive changes.

SEARCH Publications
700 S. 3rd Street
Suite 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1138
800/888-7828

Reconnecting Youth & Community—A Youth Development Approach

By the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 1996

Provides guidance to youth service providers, community leaders, and policymakers about how they can help communities shift from a problem-focused approach to serving youth to a community-youth involvement model. Provides an overview of youth development and offers strategies for implementing a youth development approach at the local level. Offers steps for implementing a campaign to promote positive images of young people and ideas for involving youth and the community in that process.

National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth
P.O. Box 13505
Silver Spring, MD 20911-3505
301/608-8098

Role of After-School Programs in the Lives of Inner-City Children

By Robert Halpern,1990

Analyzes nine after-school programs run by a Chicago youth-serving agency. Concludes with the author's impressions about the impact of the after-school programs on participating children and recommendations for improving these programs.

Chapin Hall Publications
The University of Chicago
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
773/753-5900

The Scapegoat Generation -America's War on Adolescents

By Mike A. Males,1996

Our nation's teenagers are often associated with violence, drugs, pregnancy, suicide. This book provides a different picture: how politicians, private interests and the media unfairly scapegoat adolescents for America's problems. Redefines both modern adolescence and the challenges faced by all Americans to ensure the next generation's future.

Common Courage Press
P.O. Box 702
Monroe, ME 04951
207/525-0900

Some Things Do Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluation of Youth Programs and Practices

Edited by Donna Walker James,1997

A collection of summaries of 69 evaluations, studies and reports of 49 youth interventions. These interventions in the youth development, mentoring, employment and training and education areas were supported by government or foundations. Provides a resource of empirical findings for policymakers and program practitioners.

American Youth Policy Forum
Suite 719
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/775-9731

Student Engagement and Achievement in American Secondary Schools

By Fred M. Newmann, Editor,1992

In 1985 the federal government funded two five-year centers to conduct research on effective schools. This book presents the findings of one of these studies. Topics discussed include: "The Significance and Sources of Student Engagement" and "Building New Programs for Students at Risk."

Teachers College Press
Columbia University
1234 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10027
212/678-3929

The Troubled Journey

By Peter Benson,1990

Provides the research needed to create an asset-building approach. Using surveys of almost 47,000 youth grades six to 12, it describes a vision for positive youth development, defines developmental assets, and shows how these assets guide youth in making wise choices and avoiding risky behaviors. Suggests specific strategies for parents, educators, youth workers, policymakers, and others.

SEARCH Publications
700 S. 3rd Street
Suite 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1138
800/888-7828

Urban Sanctuaries

By Milbrey W. McLaughlin, Merita A. Irby, Juliet Langman,1994

The story of exemplary neighborhood organizations that have given hope to inner-city adolescents and the adults who created and sustain them.

Jossey-Bass Inc.
350 Sansome Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
415/433-1740

Youth Today

By American Youth Work Center

This bimonthly newspaper is aimed at administrators, managers, and planners of youth services nationwide. Highlights successful youth programs and publishes updates on conferences and events, legislation, individual achievements, federal and foundation grants, publications and job opportunities.

Youth Today
1200 17th Street NW
4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
202/785-0764

Organizations

American Academy of Pediatrics

141 Northwest Point Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
847/228-5005

Produces pamphlets and brochures on a variety of topics related directly to adolescent issues. They include: Alcohol: Your Child and Drugs; Surviving and Coping with Adolescent Depression and Suicide; Making the Right Choice: Facts Young People Need to Know about Avoiding Pregnancy. Through their Community Access To Child Health (CATCH) Program, AAP provides technical assistance to develop community-based programs with funding opportunities.

Center for Youth Development and Policy Research

1875 Connecticut Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20009-1202
202/884-8266

Conducts practical research on adolescent services. Provides technical assistance to programs and policymakers on designing intervention for adolescents. Runs demonstration projects that test new theories on adolescent intervention.

Chapin Hall Center for Children

1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
773/753-5900

Works in conjunction with the University of Chicago. Specializes in surveys and quantitative research on early adolescence and intervention. Runs a few demonstration projects that test new theories on adolescent intervention.

National Crime Prevention Council

1700 K Street, NW
2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20006
202/466-6272

Helps enable people to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities through demonstration programs (for example, YAR, Youth as Resources, a program in which youth identify social issues of concern to them and design and help administer programs to address those issues); training and technical assistance; public education advertising; informing the field via brochures, booklets, books, videos; and the Crime Prevention Coalition of America.

National Network for Youth
1319 F Street, NW
Suite 401
Washington, D.C. 20004
202/783-7949
A membership organization representing over 1000 community-based organizations nationwide. Its goals are to improve and coordinate information flow, referral procedures, training, and resource sharing among members, and to raise the national consciousness about the need for crisis intervention services for adolescents and their families.

National Resource Center for Youth Services
College of Continuing Education
The University of Oklahoma
202 W. 8th Street
Tulsa, OK 74119
918/585-2986
Offers a comprehensive, evolving program for child welfare, youth service, and juvenile justice for professionals whose focus is youth. Provides a wide variety of training, technical assistance, conference planning, publications, and information/referral services.

Public/Private Ventures
1 Commerce Square
2005 Market Street
Suite 900
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215/557-4400
Policy research organization that provides practical information and advice to policymakers and program directors. Much of their work is qualitative and based on interviews, rather than quantitative. Runs demonstration projects that test new theories on adolescent intervention.

SEARCH Institute
700 S. 3rd Street
Suite 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1138
800/888-7828
Conducts practical research and focuses on early adolescence. Provides technical assistance to programs nationwide and runs demonstration projects that test new theories on adolescent intervention. Conducts an abundance of basic research on adolescence.

On-Line Resources

www.cyfc.umn.edu/youth/
University of Minnesota's Children, Youth, and Families Consortium.
Includes research, statistics, articles, essays, mentoring programs, literature reviews, bibliographies, and descriptions of programs.

www.acf.dhhs.gov/
Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Includes information about ACF programs and administrative services, organizational structure and staff information, presidential action concerning children and families, and other Internet resources. Users can access ACF bulletin board to search, view, and download policy documents.

www.youthlink.org
Foundation of America
Youthlink, National Youth Conventions (next one to be held in the year 2000), National Youth Platform, Youth in Action Campaign, and Youth Action Guide are projects of the non-profit Foundation of America. The mission of the Foundation of America is to provide ongoing and effective forums to create support and recognition for the voice, ideas, and solutions of youth.

The Family Resource Coalition of America

Changing the Way America Works for Families

The Family Resource Coalition of America (FRCA) is the national meeting place and resource center for you and people like you who believe that families deserve support. Together, we're stronger!

The Family Resource Coalition of America works to bring about a completely new societal response to children, youth, and their families: one that strengthens and empowers families and communities so that they can foster the optimal development of children, youth, and adult family members one that solves problems by preventing them. We envision a society in which all of us families, communities, government, social service institutions, businesses work together to provide healthy, safe environments for children and families to live and work in.

We envision an America in which:

- All children, youth, and families can get the resources they need right in their own neighborhood to be strong and healthy. Classes and support groups, after-school programs, emergency assistance, counseling, or job training: whatever families need, they find it.
- All communities reinforce the efforts of families to raise responsible, productive, confident, joyous children. Neighbors watch out for each other across racial, ethnic, religious, and economic lines. Diversity is a cause for celebration, not discrimination.
- All institutions that serve children and families (including schools, human services, health and mental health providers, and private agencies) work together. They embrace family support principles and put those principles into practice.
- All levels of government make family and youth needs (including economic security, adequate housing, and the viability and safety of every community) a priority.
- All workplaces have family-friendly policies and practices.

The Family Resource Coalition of America is recognized as the national convener of all those who participate in the family support movement. Our job is to bring people together, to facilitate communication among proponents of the family support approach, to provide the most current family support information and resources, and to be the umbrella under which people and organizations come together to change the way America works for families.

FRCA members:

- Are a national network of people who share your values and your dreams
- Receive resources that help them do their work
- Get discounts on information-packed FRCA conferences and publications
- Help increase the capacity and visibility of family support programs

Whether you provide, plan, or fund direct services to families, you are a vital part of the family support movement. You are strengthening and supporting families. FRCA is your professional organization, one-stop resource shopping place, and "support group" rolled into one.

For more information on joining the Family Resource Coalition of America or to receive a catalog of our publications and services, contact us at 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60606, 312/338-0900 (phone), 312/338-1522 (fax).

FAMILY RESOURCE COALITION OF AMERICA

Family Portrait

Photo © 1997 Stephen Shames / Matrix

THROUGH THE FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM in Portland, Maine, Matt visits his foster grandmother, Polly Carmichael, at the farm that has been in her family for generations. During his weekly visits, she teaches him about the care and feeding of animals. See inside front cover for more information on this and other photographs in the Pursuing the Dream project.

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